

THE
London Christian Instructor,
OR
CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINE.

No. 24.]

DECEMBER, 1819.

VOL. II.

BIOGRAPHY.

Memoir of the Rev. Samuel Palmer, fifty years Pastor of the Independent Church at Hackney.

(Continued from page 583.)

AGREEABLY to the promise at the close of our last article upon Mr. Palmer, we now proceed to give some account of his remaining publications, and to offer a brief sketch of his character.

Sometime before the appearance of the two pamphlets last mentioned, Mr. Palmer published Johnson's *Life of Dr. Watts*, with notes, containing animadversions and additions, relating to the Doctor's character, writings, and sentiments, particularly on the Trinity. To prevent repetition, the mention of this work has been reserved for the period of its second and enlarged edition, in which the author introduced "A third Appendix," principally with the view of rendering public some remarks, of which he was possessed. These had been, in part, made by the Rev. Martin Tomkins, in animadverting on the doxologies placed by Dr. Watts at the conclusion of his hymns; and partly by the Doctor himself, in answer to his friend's objections to them. Upon the notes to Dr. Johnson, little commendation can be bestowed. They are written in rather a careless style, and appear, in this respect, to the greatest disadvantage beneath the brilliant pages of the work they censure. They are also occasion-

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ally extremely fastidious; and were it not that these errors are redeemed by some good remarks on the pious and conscientious non-conformity of Dr. Watts, we could wish that this part of Mr. Palmer's labours were obliterated and forgotten. But the work, as its title denotes, and its contents discover, had an end in view beyond correcting the mistakes and obviating the censures of Dr. Johnson. That Mr. Palmer's chief design was to defend his own sentiments, by covering them with the broad shield of Dr. Watts's authority and example, is beyond a doubt: and, as it must be admitted that the Doctor, through most of his life, was favourable to what is called the *indwelling scheme*, Mr. Palmer may thus far be considered one of his disciples. Had he introduced into his sermons and other theological productions, more frequent and more lively representations of christian doctrine and experience, and founded his practical exhortations more uniformly upon the solid basis of evangelical truth, he would have borne a greater resemblance in other and very important points to that eminent and excellent divine. It is due to his memory, however, to observe, that he had now become fully conscious of some deficiency in these respects, and resolved upon immediately supplying it. Of this the following incidents furnish ample proof.

Mr. Palmer's "Letter to Dr.

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Price," disapproving of certain passages in his "Sermons on the Christian Doctrine," has been already noticed. He could not, however, content himself with this slight and single effort to check the tendency to Socinianism which he beheld in the Doctor's elaborate and eloquent discourses. Several of his own people had attended their delivery, and subscribed for their publication; and he felt it his duty, if he could not convince the Doctor of his error, to awaken them to the danger of identifying "the christian doctrine" with his vague and defective opinions. With this view he determined "to preach to his own congregation on the same subjects, and to state his sentiments freely and fully on all the principal points of debate." He introduced the proposed series by seven preliminary "discourses on truth;" which were followed by about twenty sermons on the Trinity, and the most important doctrines connected with it. Soon after their delivery, he received a request to publish them, signed by several principal members of his church.

It was some time before Mr. Palmer could find leisure to transcribe so many sermons. This task, however, effected, he submitted the whole of the manuscripts to the inspection of several judicious friends. To adopt his own words, he "found that though in the multitude of counsellors there is safety, there is also perplexity;" and he was so embarrassed by the diversity of their remarks, as to remain long in a state of suspense, which of the sermons to publish, or whether he should not suppress them all. At length he determined to send six of the preliminary discourses to the press; omitting the first of the seven, which, in the transcript, is entitled, "The

Right of every Man to declare his own Sentiments," and which contained an outline of the whole series of subjects, rendering it improper to be introduced, unless the author had determined to print all the sermons as he had delivered them. The preface to this little volume closes with remarks so truly serious and affecting, that we cannot forbear extracting them:—"The judge is even at the door, before whose tribunal you and I must meet. In such a prospect, I dare not trifle or prevaricate with you, or suppress any thing which I consider as of importance to the cause of gospel truth. If I had consulted merely my own popularity, or secular interest, instead of publishing or preaching such discourses as these, and many others which you have heard from me, I should have pursued a different and much easier method. But had I thus sought to please men, I should not have satisfied my own conscience, nor approved myself, what above all things I wish to be, the servant of Jesus Christ."

Neither the advice of his friends, nor the reception of this introductory work, was such as to encourage Mr. Palmer to publish the other discourses. As, however, they are now before the writer of these pages, he can assure the public, that, in point of composition, they would have been no discredit to the author; and among those who approved of his doctrinal opinions, they could not have failed of receiving a cordial welcome. The discourses, which appeared in print, particularly the last, "on preaching Christ crucified," undoubtedly deserved more attention than they received; and if they had come from the pen of one, who had appeared more seldom before the public, and who had enjoyed a less equivocal reputation for

orthodoxy, would have stood fair to obtain frequent republication and permanent celebrity. They contain but a slight infusion of the author's doctrinal views; while the numerous important directions they give to inquirers after truth, expressed in language beautifully simple and solemnly impressive, and calculated to aid professors of every creed, and name, and age in the world, in their theological researches, deserved for them an extended circulation, and, at some future and less controversial period, may even yet acquire it.

After the delivery, and before the publication, of those discourses, the melancholy tidings were received in England, of the death of Howard; who, amidst his unexampled efforts of universal benevolence, had a select number of friends to whom he was peculiarly attached, and among whom Mr. Palmer enjoyed by no means the smallest measure of his attention and esteem. With the manuscript life of his incomparable friend, which Mr. Palmer composed and preserved with the greatest care, most of our readers have become acquainted, by means of Mr. Brown's more extended and elaborate work; in the compilation of which, he was materially indebted to it. On the sabbath after the painful intelligence arrived, Mr. Palmer delivered a sermon on the death of Mr. Howard; selecting a passage for his text which strikingly commemorated his unrestrained and truly evangelical philanthropy. The sermon was immediately printed, and, to adopt Mr. Brown's words, "was bought up with great avidity; not only on account of its general excellence, but of the authentic particulars of his life, which the habits of friendship, in which the author had lived with him, enabled him to give."

At the beginning of the following year, 1791, Mr. Palmer experienced a trial of a very different description, occasioned by a misunderstanding between him and the Rev. John Fell, the particulars of which are given in the subjoined note.*

* Five or six years before, had appeared "An Abridgment of the Bible, for the use of Schools and Families, divided into chapters, with Notes and Observations, in the manner recommended by Dr. Watts." This book Mr. Palmer had introduced into his school, without any knowledge of the Editor, or any other design than to restrict his pupils to the more plain and useful portions of the Old Testament. With nothing beyond suspicion, and nothing but this circumstance to warrant it, Mr. Fell, then Tutor at Homerton, publicly attributed the production itself to Mr. Palmer, and insinuated that his design in publishing and using it was to conceal some doctrines of the gospel to which he was disaffected. Had Mr. Fell given himself the trouble of first waiting on Mr. Palmer, and inquiring of him as a friend and a brother, what were the particulars of the case, the disreputable and unpleasant circumstances which followed might have been avoided. He would then have found, that Mr. Palmer had for some time dispensed with the use of the abridgment in his school, through disapprobation of the manner in which it was executed; that he had always made use of the established version of the *New Testament*, and had adopted the abridgment of nothing but the Old. He would, moreover, have been convinced that Mr. Palmer, so far from having produced the work, knew no more of the editor, than did Mr. Fell himself. But, instead of adopting this proper and scriptural course, Mr. Fell, in a monthly meeting sermon, on "The signs of the times," mentioned with strong censure the abridgment of the Bible, and described the editor as one "who supported his reputation by a professed veneration for deceased ministers." No one who knew Mr. Palmer, could mistake the allusion; and no one who loved him could wish to conceal from him the wanton and groundless accusation. At first—we have it in his own words—he had no suspicion that Mr. Fell could refer to him, nor could he even guess what book it was that he censured: but upon finding the report prevail much to his disadvantage, and hearing that Dr. Stafford had mention-

The years 1792 and 1793 were distinguished by no unusual event, if we except the delivery of a rather singular charge, at an ordination at Banbury, from Canticles i. 6. It was not published at the time; but appeared sixteen

years after, in a little volume containing the author's correspondence with Mr. Newton. Mr. Palmer had sent it to his venerable friend for revision, and as he had returned it with remarks on what he deemed a se-

ed him as the object of Mr. Fell's attack, he waited on the Doctor, who frankly told him that Mr. Fell had said in the vestry, after the sermon, "*I have no doubt Mr. Palmer, of Hackney, was the editor of the work.*" Upon this Mr. Palmer addressed his accuser; acknowledging that he had a right to express his sentiments on the obnoxious publication; but observing that before he ascribed it to him, he should have obtained some evidence to support the charge. Mr. Palmer then explicitly disclaimed all concern in the publication, and all knowledge of the editor; stated his views in first using it in his school, and in afterwards discontinuing it; and concluded by leaving Mr. Fell "to make that use of this information which his prudence and candour might suggest." The answer of Mr. Fell was truly surprising. It contained no apology for his conduct, and no acknowledgment of his mistake; nor, of course, any repetition of the charge: but it was filled with gross abuse upon a totally different subject, which left no doubt of the real ground of Mr. Fell's displeasure towards the object of his attack. Our readers perhaps remember that Mr. Fell published an answer to Mr. Farmer's work on miracles. The critical reviewers, in noticing what Mr. Fell had written, took occasion to express a wish that Mr. Farmer would state to the public the difference which he supposed to exist between the miracles of the Bible, and those of the Church of Rome; and to this Mr. Farmer immediately replied, by observing, that he had done so, in a chapter of which Mr. Fell had taken no notice. Mr. Farmer being blind, Mr. Palmer was his amanuensis, in communicating this information to the reviewers. Now would any one have imagined, that a theological disputant like Mr. Fell would have been so weak, as not only to take offence at such a circumstance, but also to acknowledge that offence, in a letter on another affair, addressed to the individual from whom the offence was received? Keeping out of sight as much as possible the immediate subject of their correspondence, Mr. Fell, in his answer to Mr. Palmer, angrily asks, "Did you not send a note to the critical reviewer concerning my controversy with Mr.

Farmer?" Of course, Mr. Palmer immediately replied that he did: then to show his further respect for a correspondent who could scarcely treat him with common civility, he added, among other observations, that Mr. Farmer, before his death, had given him some remarks on Mr. Fell's answer, to publish when he pleased; and reminded Mr. Fell that he had offered to submit the manuscript to his inspection.

Upon receiving this information, Mr. Fell's wrath entirely abated, and he addressed Mr. Palmer in altogether a different style, giving him full credit for his assertions respecting the abridged Bible, and promising to "rise up and contradict the report in whatever company he should hear it;" adding, that he would, on a future occasion, call on him and explain some other circumstances mentioned in their correspondence, and closing his letter in the most respectful manner. Graatified by this change, Mr. Palmer respectfully acknowledged the concessions of his correspondent; stated, according to his request, the particulars of the original report as he had received it; and expressed his pleasure that the affair had come to an end. But, to his great surprise, Mr. Fell's anger again burst forth, assuring Mr. Palmer, that "he had made no concession," that "nothing which he had written should be interpreted as a concession," and that "he was determined the matter should not rest here." He now endeavoured to propagate a report equally unjust and injurious with the former—"that Mr. Palmer had done more to promote the sale of the work than the editor himself." If it were worth while to inquire who *most* of all promoted its sale, we should perhaps be answered, Mr. Fell, by his frequent mention of it in circles where otherwise it would never have been known. We have, however, nothing in view beyond the vindication of Mr. Palmer against his false, unreasonable, and, we fear, vindictive censures. But for the sake of truth and justice, this outline of the affair would never have appeared. It was once Mr. Palmer's intention to publish it, with the whole correspondence; and he had carefully drawn up the statement for that purpose; but regard to the reputation and welfare of Mr. Fell occasioned him to desist.

rious defect, the author thought necessary, in publishing Mr. Newton's letter, to add the production of which it complained. The aged critic's remarks are so lively and ingenious, that we shall meet with no blame for introducing them, especially as they afford a tolerably accurate picture of the charge. "I felt a want of something. I was sorry that your plan confined you so strictly to the single point of *deportment*. I compared your charge to a historical painting, in which the light and shade were properly observed; the inferior groups of objects were well delineated and disposed; but the principal figure to which all the parts of the picture should refer, was left out. Suppose the subject were the death of Cæsar: though the conspirators and the scene were finely drawn, if Cæsar himself were left out, the piece would be very defective. I think a charge concerning the ministry of the gospel cannot be complete, unless a general idea, at least, of the gospel be given, and the character and offices of the Saviour be recognised."

In the year 1794, appeared the Protestant Dissenter's Magazine; which Mr. Palmer, from its first publication, considerably encouraged by various communications. Soon after its appearance, a report was widely circulated, and generally believed, that the work originated with him, and was chiefly, if not entirely, under his controul. This report he at first treated with indifference; but finding it prevail, he deemed it necessary to counteract it by a letter to the editor, which was published on the cover of the magazine.

The ordination of the Rev. William Chaplin, at Bishop Stortford, in the year 1797, gave occasion to Mr. Palmer to publish an excellent sermon, ad-

dressed to the church, which went through two editions.

In the year 1798, appeared his "Apology for the Christian Sabbath:" dedicated by permission to Mr. Wilberforce. The pamphlet deserves attention upon the ground of its own merit; while the circumstances which induced the author to publish it, render it still more worthy of our notice. The Militia Bill of 1796, by proposing to exercise that portion of our soldiery on the Lord's day, had excited serious alarm in the devout part of the community. The London dissenting ministers lost no time in opposing so obnoxious and injurious a measure, and applied to the Bishop of London, Dr. Porteus, for his concurrence. That pious and amiable prelate immediately answered their application, and removed their fears of a compulsory violation of the sabbath, in a most candid and friendly letter. But though the statute did not *compel* the militia to be trained on a Sunday, it *allowed* them to be so on certain hours of the day; and thus opened the door to scenes of unusual dissipation and vice. Mr. Palmer was not alone at that period in advocating the sanctity of the christian sabbath, nor was his work inferior either in ability or effect to the productions of his brethren. He might perhaps have chosen a better title. *Apologies* for the Bible—for brotherly love—and for observing the sabbath, are, as Mr. Newton observes, needless. The Greek word denotes defence; but in English it sounds too soft, and seems too complaisant, for what is enjoined by the authority of God.

The abridgment of Doddridge's Family Expositor was published in the year 1800, and is mentioned as an additional proof of Mr. Palmer's unwearied labours, and his regard alike to

the wishes and the memory of the excellent author. The design originated with Dr. Doddridge, who, upon finding himself unable, through multiplied engagements and declining health, to accomplish it, wrote to Mr. Orton, earnestly requesting him to undertake the task. This he seriously purposed doing; but, delaying it till his nerves became too weak and shattered, he devolved it on Mr. Palmer, who he knew would be likely to want nothing but time to effect it. As Mr. Palmer had committed the manuscript of Mr. Orton's notes on the Old Testament to his successor at Shrewsbury, the Rev. R. Gentleman, and as the abridgment of Doddridge was to be printed uniformly with that work, he obtained his consent to prepare both for the press; but his premature decease, before he had quite completed the former, gave the latter again into Mr. Palmer's hands. The expense of this undertaking was generously borne by Daniel Lister, Esq. to whom it is dedicated.

At the beginning of the year 1801, Mr. Palmer experienced a severe trial, in the loss of his third daughter, a most engaging and amiable child, just entered on the fifteenth year of her age. The distressing event, however, served to manifest in him the power of religion to sustain the troubled spirit; and in his friends, the readiness of christian sympathy to communicate advice and relief. The venerable Newton was, as usual, peculiarly prompt and affectionate in the discharge of this duty. No man could preach with more consistency and confidence from the Apostle's words; "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." "I can truly," he says, "sympathise with you, Mrs. Palmer, and your family. I, likewise, have known trouble, and have

not forgotten how kindly you then sympathised with me. May the Lord, who showed himself all-sufficient to me, be equally your support. May you and your's taste and see how good he is, not only when he gives, but when he takes away. Faithful are the wounds of that friend, who was himself wounded and slain for us." This, and other kindred efforts of true christian friendship, were instrumental in restoring the mind of the bereaved aid, at first, disconsolate father, to something like its wonted composure. The sabbath after the funeral, he preached a deeply affecting sermon from the words of our Lord to the mourning family and friends of Jairus;—"The damsel is not dead, but sleepeth."

Nothing material occurred between this and the year 1806, when Mr. Palmer met with a severe personal calamity and confinement. In passing along Houndsditch, he fell into a cellar, which had been carelessly left open; and though, by a merciful providence, not a limb was broken, he was so severely bruised and agitated, that he could not preach for several weeks. Upon his recovery and re-appearance in public, he addressed his people from the words of the Psalmist;—"I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord."

His intimacy with the late Mr. Newton has more than once been noticed. Upon the death of that devoted minister of Christ, he gave full proof of the liberality of his disposition, by delivering to his own people a funeral sermon, containing a faithful and well-drawn portrait of his departed friend, to whom, as to a true "son of consolation," he applied the eulogium passed by Luke on Barnabas;—"He was a good man, and full of the Holy

Ghost, and of faith; and much people were added unto the Lord." The sermon was published in the volume containing the correspondence, to which allusion has already been made, and which contains several of those masterly and beautiful touches, for which the letters of Newton are so generally admired.

We have not thought it necessary to notice all the works which Mr. Palmer merely revised and re-published. Among them;—"A Selection of Sermons from the Works of Matthew Henry;" "A Collection of Family Prayers from the Works of Baxter, Henry, Watts, and Doddridge;" "Ryther's Seaman's Preacher;" and "Devout Meditations from Bennet's Christian Oratory, with an Account of the Author's Life;" are most frequently read, and most highly esteemed. We have also omitted in their proper place several minor publications of which Mr. Palmer was author. Of these, the principal are; "A Funeral Sermon for the Rev. H. Crabb;" "Christian Liberty," a monthly-meeting sermon; three Sermons to children, and one to the poor, in a cheap form; and "A Warning to Christian Professors," in five letters to the Rev. Rowland Hill. An accurate list of his numerous works will be found at the end of the posthumous volume of his Sermons.

One original work, of considerable importance, remains to be noticed. Although it does not bear Mr. Palmer's name, and was avowedly the production of more than a single author, a principal share of it is universally attributed to his prolific and industrious pen. Our readers anticipate a reference to the "New Directory for Nonconformist Churches; containing, Free Remarks on their Mode of

Public Worship, and a Plan for the Improvement of it." That improprieties sometimes occur in the public devotions of Dissenters, all must allow. Of these, the New Directory honestly and freely complains; but whether the remedy it proposes to apply will ever be adopted, or would cure the disease, is extremely doubtful. Forms of prayer, composed either by men of superior wisdom and piety, for general use, or by each minister for himself, would certainly secure a more uniform correctness, and, if published for the use of the people, would enable them to join with more facility in the several petitions. But for these advantages, we fear that such an expedient would compel us to sacrifice much greater, and deprive our public devotions of no inconsiderable part of their fervour, solemnity, and effect.

Just before this work was published, Mr. Palmer reached the seventieth year of his age, which he notices in his diary in the following serious manner:—"This is the most remarkable period of my life, and calls for some extraordinary reflections. I have now lived to see the close of that period of time which the scripture mentions as the ordinary duration of the life of man on earth. When a person has arrived at this age, he may be considered as having fulfilled his days; his lease may be said to be out, and if he continue to dwell any longer in the body, he is, as it were, upon sufferance. This is now the case with me, and it is an affecting consideration. It is, indeed, matter of wonder and thankfulness that I survive. It is particularly affecting, that I have lived to see the whole race of ministers, who were fixed in and near London when I came hither, carried off the stage of life. I also have

seen my whole church and congregation swept off; not one adult person is now living among my hearers, who was here when I came first to this place."

Mr. Palmer enjoyed his usual health, till within a very short time of his death. His last journey from home was to Chigwell, where he spent a few days with his son, and preached twice on the sabbath in his domestic chapel. In his diary, he mentions peculiarly profitable meditations during the following night, which, through fatigue and slight indisposition, was spent without much sleep. The next day he felt himself so well, that though his son wished to convey him quite home, he preferred to walk the last three miles of the journey.

He had now scarcely a month left of his earthly existence. He continued, however, to discharge his public as well as private duties, almost to its termination; "preaching," as Mr. Toller observes, "without difficulty, on one Lord's day, and taking his flight into eternity early in the morning on the next." The same judicious and affectionate friend has given the following account of his last moments:—"After taking some refreshment, he repeated the language of the Apostle;—'I have fought the good fight,' &c. Realizing views of the mediatorial character of Christ seemed to fill his soul with sacred joy, particularly in the repetition of that passage, 'Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.' The text, also, of his last sermon was frequently repeated, and seemed to be deeply enjoyed;—'His commandments are not grievous.' He often appeared engaged in prayer, uttered sentences only imperfectly heard, and, at length, in the most perfect composure, departed without a struggle."

We cannot hope to improve upon the sketch of Mr. Palmer's character, drawn by the same masterly hand. No one knew him better than Mr. Toller, and no one could better impart his knowledge to others. "As a preacher, his manner was grave and dignified, calm and serious; his pronunciation easy and natural; his prayers simple and devotional, interspersed copiously with apt quotations from scripture, and partaking of a reasonable and desirable degree of compass and variety. He never seemed for a moment to forget the great business in which he was engaged. If his delivery wanted any thing, it was what nature seemed constitutionally to have denied him, namely, *animation*; and yet, on certain subjects and occasions, it appeared that he could feel, and make others feel too. I have seen a considerable proportion of a congregation in tears, under the tenderness and pathos of his representations." "His public discourses were the addresses of a wise and pious man, seriously conversing with his surrounding flock, and 'reasoning with them out of the scriptures.' His treatment of sacred subjects was remarkably perspicuous; his ideas were well arranged; and few ministers knew better what thoughts belonged to a subject, or succeeded better in putting them in their proper place. The supreme object of his ministry was to secure and establish the fundamental interests of *grace* and *holiness* in the constitution of the gospel, in their mutual necessity, harmony, and consistency; laying the foundation of human hope in the sovereignty of divine mercy, through the mediation of the great Redeemer, in inseparable connection with that 'holiness without which no man can see the Lord.' Here I am confident

he rested his own soul, and hither he wished to lead his hearers; while, with respect to the various topics of theological discussion, he had a mind as open to conviction as most men, and as little under the undue bias of education and prejudice. He freely thought for himself, and was disposed to pursue truth wherever it should lead him."

"He was a Dissenter, properly speaking, from principle. Indeed, the most popular works he ever published, which had the greatest spread, and perhaps produced the greatest effect, were on the subject of dissent from the Established Church. Yet, though he treated the subject with the firmness of a man, and the faithfulness of a christian, bitterness, and wrath, and illiberality, cannot justly be attributed to him; as an evidence of which, it appears that he was upon as intimate terms of friendship with, and as highly respected by, many most respectable clergymen, and private members of the Establishment, as any dissenting minister in the kingdom."

"He was the father of the Sunday schools established in this place, and the zealous friend of others of similar tendency."

"As the distributor of public charities, as the almoner of the bounties of others, and in the beneficent communication of his own property, he felt the truth of the maxim, and acted upon its reality—that 'it is more blessed to give than to receive.' Since the day of his departure from the Academy, he has been the affectionate adviser and patron of students and young ministers, who

looked up to him as a father, and a most kind and attentive friend and helper to his poor brethren in the ministry.

"He was one of the oldest, most judicious, steady, faithful, and affectionate friends, I ever had. Though there was a 'freedom of speech,' which he sometimes used in his intercourse with his friends, which, to a stranger, had the appearance of harshness, they who knew him best were the least affected by those seeming severities, knowing the honesty and goodness of his heart.

"His qualities and virtues not being of a showy, dazzling description, but intrinsic and substantial, will probably secure permanence of recollection and respect, by their solidity; and, therefore, I venture to predict, that his fame will last longer than that of many of more noisy and popular name; nay, that he will be more honoured after his death, than during his life. 'The memory of the just is blessed.'"

These extracts are taken from the sermon preached by Mr. Toller, at Hackney, on the Sunday after the funeral. The address at the grave, which was published with it, was delivered by the Rev. H. F. Burder, M. A. who had assisted him during the last two years of his life; and who, soon after that event, was unanimously chosen to succeed him in the pastoral office. We are happy to be able to state, that, under the ministry of Mr. Burder, the church and congregation have considerably increased. May a double portion of the spirit of glory and of God rest upon them!

SHORT DISCOURSES FOR FAMILIES, &c.

No. XXIV.

THE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." 2 Tim. iii. 16.

THERE are some Protestants who seem to have adopted the maxim of the Papists—that ignorance is the mother of devotion. They are afraid to examine truth in all its bearings, or to have its foundations exposed, lest the ignorant should stumble, or the unbelieving be confirmed in their prejudices. Such persons do unspeakable harm to the cause of truth and religion, by these sentiments: for they hide from view the broad and solid basis, as well as the fair proportions of the sacred temple of divine truth. Thus the cause of religion and of God is degraded; while the advocates of such sentiments seem to have more fears for truth than God its author, and to resort to those means to support it which he has not condescended to employ. He has said, "Search the Scriptures," and "be ready always to give to every one that asketh, a reason of the hope that is in you." Now this you cannot do, if you are not taught the evidences on which divine inspiration rests.

The age of miracles is closed, and the era of inspiration is expired; for God has completed the sacred canon; and now our reason is to ascertain the evidence of these documents.—The man who requires more for scripture, than would be sufficient to authenticate any other record of antiquity, requires too much, and is unreasonable. If two documents of history of equal weight of evidence are placed before him, and he admits the one, but rejects the other, he is absurd and unjust. If I should assert

that there was formerly such a city as Babylon, you do not expect me to work a miracle to prove it to you;—if I recount the wonderful buildings that belonged to it, and they should seem strange and unexampled, still you would yield to a certain degree of evidence. If I could bring the testimony of historians—persons who had seen it; the collateral history of neighbouring nations, whose history was mixed with that of the city in question; and if all these testimonies agreed;—yet though I could neither work a miracle, nor show you the city still existing, yet I should have proved the point at issue to the satisfaction of every reasonable man. How do most of us know there is such a country as France? we never saw it: but we have the testimony of travellers; facts in our own history; facts in the history of the world; and the perfect agreement of all persons capable of testifying; and therefore we should be reckoned worse than mad to deny it. Now let christianity be supported by fair argument—by the same arguments, and we are not afraid of the issue.

It is common, say infidels, for all impostors to appeal to miracles; and how can it be proved, at this distance of time, that there is any more credit due to the Mosaic miracles, than to any others? It is indeed common for all counterfeiters to wear the semblance of genuine coin; but who would be so absurd as to make this an argument to prove that there is no genuine gold or silver. But the reply is still more satisfactory. It is one thing to say a miracle was performed, and another thing actually to exhibit it. Mahomet, the greatest impostor that ever appeared, told where he

had been, and what he had seen, and what he could do: but no one ever saw him do these things; no witnesses ever appeared at the peril of their life to testify to his resurrection, yet his religion was received, because it was propagated by the sword. Now, in the Mosaic miracles, you see the force and power of truth;—here is conviction wrought through the senses: 600,000 men, contrary to their present interest, and often to their wishes, were obedient to the single word of Moses; and from their belief in the things which they had seen, were induced to undergo the greatest privations, and fatigues, and sufferings. Is this no proof of the fact? And these things can be proved from the testimony of collateral history, and from heathen historians. The same things may be said of the New Testament miracles. If they had never been seen but by friends; if they had been done in a corner, among only a select band, you might have had ground for refusing your assent: but they were done publicly; in the very face of the severest opposition; and often the miracles were wrought upon enemies, while these very enemies contribute their testimony to the facts. Here is the most solid proof, and all the objections of infidels cannot shake this evidence.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is one of those miracles in the New Testament, which all the combined sophistry and malice of disbelievers in every age have been unable to invalidate. Here could be no collusion: because his severest enemies had possession of his dead body: *they* placed the large stone, *they* sealed it to prevent its removal; *they* set a band of Roman soldiers to watch: but the stone was removed, the seal was broken; the soldiers were not there when the disciples came on the morning

upon which he said he would rise; and yet no one, either of the guards or the disciples, was ever impeached or punished for stealing the body. The *same day* the report spread that he was risen, and continued spreading. The apostle appeared only six weeks after, in the temple, before all the people, proclaiming the resurrection: they appeal to recent and well-known events; they boldly challenge the elders of the Jews, who are silent as to the fact; they convert a great company of the priests; they proselyte seven thousand of the people under two discourses; and yet no arguments are brought forward, but the sword, to silence them. Now we maintain that it is impossible to invalidate this evidence, and though we have read the writings of many infidels, we have never met with any thing approaching even to the semblance of a fair or valid argument against it.

But perhaps you will say, Does any other historian record these events; or is there any evidence of the fact but what is derived from your own writers? Yes: one, the most celebrated of the Roman historians, a heathen, a declared enemy to Christ, and an idolater, or perhaps more properly an *infidel*, testifies to the crucifixion of Christ in the reign of Tiberius, and under the procuratorship of Pilate;—the temporary check this gave his religion—its subsequent revival, and the progress it made in all Judea, and even to the very city of Rome. Now all this is attested in the Annals of Tacitus. But perhaps you will say, why if he records the death, does he not relate also the resurrection of Jesus? Here the enemies of christianity reduce themselves to this dilemma: they say, that if he had given testimony to the resurrection, they would believe it;

well, but it must be on the ground that he believed it himself; or else his testimony is of no weight. Either he believed what he wrote, or he did not: if he did not believe, it is vain to talk of his testimony: if he did believe it, then he must have been a Christian. And then the enemies of truth would have escaped from the difficulty, by saying, 'Ah! but now he is a Christian.' And thus they endeavour to set his testimony aside. But how absurd and unjust is this procedure. We can adduce a testimony to the resurrection of Christ, which is far superior to that of Tacitus, of one who lived at the time,—*at the time* did not believe it, in spite of all the testimony of the Apostles; one that was an avowed and public enemy; one who slew many Christians for their attachment to this cause; who continued for several years a more violent enemy than Tacitus: at last *he* is convinced; for he sees Christ alive, and being no longer able to resist the evidence of truth, he submits. He believes, and becomes a propagator of the gospel. He was not of the party; he was not in league with the twelve apostles; he was not interested. Here is a man of the most respectable connexions, a man of extensive learning, of great prospects, sacrificing all his worldly interests, undergoing the severest sufferings, and at last dying for his faith, not upon the testimony of *others*, but upon the independent evidence afforded to himself: but yet an evidence perfectly accordant, and, therefore, additional to that already received. Infidels are now accustomed to say, 'This is the testimony of a friend, we cannot admit it.' They say they will admit the testimony of disinterested persons: yet, when they are named, they still refuse assent, and say '*they* believed it, *they*

were christians.' What is the use of adducing the testimony of a man for what he does not believe? And when he does believe it, then he is a christian. Why have infidels attached so much respect to the testimony of Tacitus, and so little to that of Luke or of Paul? it is on this most absurd principle, which we have endeavoured to expose; and if Tacitus had added to his detail, the fact of the resurrection, they would have refused his evidence, either saying, he was a *believer*, or else charging christians with interpolating his writings. Why is it that infidels believe in Tacitus, and not in Luke or Paul? There is no ground for the preference. The testimony of the Evangelists and of Paul derives strength from that very point to which infidels object, viz. that they believed what they wrote.

But we must glance at the argument in favour of revelation, derived from prophecy, and shall refer, for an illustration, to those relating to the destruction of two great and celebrated cities of antiquity—Babylon and Jerusalem. Let us examine a little the nature of the prophecies relating to the destruction of Babylon. There are several particulars which are worthy of especial notice.

1. Cyrus is expressly named, 200 years before he was born, as the commander of the army. Isa. xlv. 1. 2. It is said the army should be Medes and Persians, and profane historians testify the fact; Cyrus united the two empires in himself. Isa. xxi. 2. 3. That it should be sudden, and in a night of feasting. Isa. xiii. 6--9. Jeremiah, li. 36--40, compared with Dan. v. and vi. Isa. xlvii. 11.

Now, of the fulfilment of these prophecies, no man can doubt who has read ancient history. And let it be remarked that these

books, which contain them, have come down to us not through the Jews alone, but by means of that very translation which a heathen prince had made to gratify his literary taste, nearly 300 years before the christian era.

There is a second remarkable prediction in the New Testament, which I must defend from the objections of infidelity. All historians agree that Jerusalem was utterly destroyed within half a century after the death of Christ, and the christians prove the truth of their books by the evident and undeniable prediction of this event by Christ, who was crucified, and most of his apostles, long before the event happened. Now infidels say these predictions were written after the event, and have been palmed upon the world by christians, as true prophecies. We never yet saw any infidel writer attempt to prove this; there is no proof of it. But the very reverse can be proved, viz. that those predictions were uttered by Christ before his crucifixion; for (1) they were the very ground and cause of his accusation before Pilate and the Elders of the Jews. Having failed in several attempts to convict him; they brought at last two false witnesses, that said they had heard him speak blasphemous words against that holy place and against Moses; saying he would *destroy their city*, and change the commandments Moses had delivered to them. There was no other charge brought against him, and he did not deny this; though it was misinterpreted by his enemies. Now that his death did take place at Jerusalem in the manner and on the grounds stated by the Evangelists, we could adduce the testimony of Josephus, a Jewish historian, and an enemy to christianity, as well as that of several Roman historians. It was, therefore, on this accusation, grounded on the

prophecy of Christ, that his execution took place, and the man who denies this flies in the face of all evidence and all history.

But to confirm this matter, there is yet another proof against which also no possible objection can arise. Matthew's gospel was written and published, and was in the hands of multitudes long before the destruction of Jerusalem took place; and was one of the means of spreading the gospel of Jesus so extensively as was witnessed by many writers besides the christians. And this gospel in the xxivth chapter contains the predictions relating to Jerusalem.

But there is a third series of prophecies, the illustration of which must be briefly attempted. This series of prophecy is the most glorious and interesting of any in all the sacred canon. It is that which relates to Christ, and which was in the possession of many nations above 200 years before the Saviour's appearance. I have already stated that the prophecies of Isaiah were in the keeping of a heathen prince, several centuries before the appearance of Christ; from thence they were disseminated among the Greeks and Romans, and Virgil, writing an ode on the coming of the great personage expected by all the nations, has quoted and translated some of the finest passages in the prophecies of Isaiah. The singularity, the mystery of Isaiah's prophecies prevent their application to any but Jesus Christ.

From the establishment of the inspiration of the New Testament then, there arises a most potent inference in favour of the Old. If I have proved the resurrection of Christ, I have established his pretensions, I have established his authority, and his authority is most decisive in favour of the Old Testament. He appeals to it continually; his doctrines and his mission are found

ed upon it. His authority and that of his apostles once proved, we have added the strongest evidence to those books to which they appeal as the words of God.

But there is one strong external evidence to the truth of scripture, which I have not yet mentioned; which cannot be passed over—it is the deluge. To enter into the argument in detail would be impossible—to quote the authorities of heathen writers to the fact, equally impossible. We must then be content with appealing to the scriptural statement, supported by the observations of geologists and philosophers in every country and in every age. The skeletons of sea animals on the tops of mountains many hundred miles inland, vast bodies of animal remains found in perfect preservation in the midst of rock, or beds of clay, at a considerable distance from the surface of the earth; and animals, peculiar to one quarter of the globe, found in another the most distant. Now the general opinion of the ablest judges is, that the whole surface of the globe has been under water, and has experienced some severe convulsion. Here are natural facts in accordance with the scriptural account of the deluge. I am aware I have entered but lightly and generally into this important subject, and I know I might have touched upon many more arguments, such as the uniform simplicity and frankness of truth; for we all know and appreciate the natural signs of veracity. There is a tone and a manner characteristic of honesty, which is both intelligible and convincing. Then there is the concurrence of a number of witnesses: then their uniform firmness and intrepidity in their testimony: then the sacrifices of interest, property, and life, they all made for the truth: the testimony of their enemies to their

character: their disinterestedness—their firmness: and the additional testimony of the uninspired men who lived with them, and conversed with them, and whose testimony is quite independent of the original writers. But besides these, the information the Bible conveys on subjects, of which, without it, we could know nothing; the sublimity and purity which breathe in every part; the accordance of all its parts, and the correspondence of the whole with the natural and moral perfections of God. These form an accumulation of evidence, which it requires the obstinacy of a perverted, the blindness of a prejudiced, and the rancour of a sinful heart, to resist.

And now let us ask, How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? There are some things which are spoken of in scripture, as a sign to them that believe not—these are the things that challenge your faith:—they leave you without excuse if you do not believe; they must prove “a savour of death unto death.” We have not presented the Bible to you as a book of common interest, or as a book for the gratification of historians, scholars, or antiquaries. It is the only authentic discovery of the way of salvation; “It is profitable for doctrine,” &c. We are far from imagining that a belief of the evidence in favour of the Bible, is all that is necessary. To be the disciple of any book of precepts, we must do more than satisfy ourselves that its contents are true; we must read it; we must practise it; we must live by it. It is as a sufficient disclosure of the divine mercy, that we would wish to press it upon your attention, and as it will be found the best book in the world to live by, so the universal experience and testimony of both believers and unbelievers, proves it has always been the best to die by.

ORIGINAL ESSAYS, COMMUNICATIONS, &c.

ON GRAMMAR SCHOOLS FOR
CHILDREN OF DISSENTERS.*To the Editors.*

AN extensive and serious complaint has long been heard, from pious and considerate parents, among Protestant Dissenters, that means of educating their youth liberally, and impressing their minds with those moral and religious principles, which they deem of the first importance, are extremely difficult of attainment. It is not the object of this address to attempt a statement of the causes of this complaint, but rather to point out some consequences, and to offer a suggestion towards a remedy. In the present age, the advantages of a liberal and classical education are held in much greater estimation, than half a century ago; and with opulent and respectable parents, in all classes of society, higher degrees of these advantages are sought. To members of the Church of England, a provision for classical and superior education is amply supplied. Hence it becomes expedient that Protestant Dissenters should use their endeavours to obtain such mental cultivation for their sons, as will enable them to meet, on equal ground, those of similar station in life, who have received their tuition in the numerous and respectable seminaries connected with the national church.

Our religious establishment has hitherto thought it right to exclude from her public seats of learning (at least, from the attainment of literary distinction there) all who refuse subscription to her articles, from whence great disadvantage and difficulty must happen to Nonconformists, in the prosecution of their literary pursuits. And although

among those educated for the ministry, in the seminaries of Protestant Dissenters, it may, perhaps, be said, without arrogance, that some have attained, and may still attain, eminence in literature, yet instances of this kind are comparatively few; and their children must of necessity often be placed under the care of instructors, who, if men of religion, and respectable for learning, yet, in their religious views, differing from the parents of their pupils. It is to be lamented that so little of a religious nature appears to enter into the discipline of many even of our better sort of schools; and if the seeds of piety and serious example are planted at home, school does not favour their growth. The children of Protestant Dissenters, moreover, thus educated, are not fortified and armed, in their youth, with just views of the principles of the religion they afterwards profess. They do not feel rightly the honourable character of conscientious dissent, nor are they justly impressed with the sound and scriptural basis on which it is built. They are more likely to be assailed by the fear that their principles are in some way inferior to those of the majority of their countrymen, than to feel the honour and peace they are calculated to confer on every enlightened and consistent professor. Shrewd observers, among members of the Establishment, have long seen, and, in the absence of their better recollection, perhaps, animadverted on this defect with some severity. In one of our respectable periodical publications, the reviewer of a recent work by a Dissenter has given an instance of this kind. He considers, that, with all the requisite means and calls that

opulence and station in society could give, Protestant Dissenters have, inconsistently and unnaturally, been inattentive to this most important provision and duty to their offspring.*

Much to the comfort of pious parents, and the acknowledged advantage of their sons, not only as it respects learning, but *spiritual character*, a seminary, some years established in Middlesex, has given unquestionable evidence, in many hopeful instances, of the use and propriety of a respectable classical Dissenter's school, conducted on christian principles; and the design of this address would be fully answered, by every division of the kingdom producing a requisite establishment, proportioned to the demand for it, similar to the school at Mill Hill. It seems very desirable, according to the numbers and station in society of Protestant Dissenters, that every district in the kingdom should afford such means as are here hinted at, for the education of their sons; and surely, with a combined effort, the means cannot be very difficult to attain.

The writer of this letter, who is a native and resident of the county of Essex, would, *for an example*, suggest that county, where Protestant Dissenters are numerous and respectable. Its proximity and convenient communication with the metropolis and its environs, would probably render it an eligible district for such an institution. Let the commencement be the subscription of a sum of money, in shares of 100*l.* or 50*l.* sufficient for the purchase and fitting up of suitable premises, (the shares to bear interest, and to be transferable,) to be invested in a trust appointed by the subscribers, and from time to time

filled up by them for this purpose. This trust, with a committee to be appointed from the same authority, should provide masters, and constitute a body of directors and managers, of all that regards the welfare of the house. The provision of masters should be such as to afford means of the best education. A *primary care* should be to secure in the character of every teacher, evangelical piety, and every possible arrangement be made to guard the education of the pupils in the genuine principles of the gospel. The discipline of the school, and the religious principles on which it is conducted, should be liberal, so as not to exclude the children of any conscientious christian parent. Different degrees of education might be given, at the desire of parents, and rates of charge made accordingly; so that the advantages of *religious principles* and *example* might be within the power of pious parents of different circumstances. Some provision might be made to favour the education of the sons of ministers, (to a certain extent,) who may be unable to educate them, and for their orphans; and with that view, perhaps, some connexion with churches and congregations wishing it, might be established by a small collection, every year made and paid to the institution, for which such churches and congregations should have a presentation to the school free, or at a reduced charge. The regulation and management of the institution, however, would be a matter of future consideration. These thoughts the writer presumes to offer only as the mere hasty occurrence of his own mind, and with a view only to call forth the attention of more able advocates and friends to a cause which he has, for many years, felt in common with others, of very serious and important concern.

* See the Quarterly Review, No. XIX, Article 5, at the end.

He trusts, if this suggestion obtains a place in your Magazine, it will, among your numerous and respectable readers, meet the eye of many who feel the importance of the subject, and of some who possess the inclination and the power to aid and advocate means for its furtherance; and that your pages will, before long, contain some more specific flort from an abler friend.

Oct. 28, 1819.

V.

ON THE CONSCIENTIOUS EMPLOYMENT OF PROPERTY.

(Concluded from page 674.)

PROPERTY ought also to be conscientiously employed in performing the duties of charity, though this is neither always, nor so often, done, as is generally imagined. In no country, at no period, has beneficence been more exercised, commended, and encouraged, than in our own land, and our own times. If, however, a regard to motives is admitted, all are not liberal who part with their money. "In works of charity," says Dr. South, "it is the will which gives worth to the oblation; and as to God's acceptance, sets the poorest giver upon the same level with the richest. Nor is this all; but so perfectly does the value of all charitable acts take its measure and proportion from the will, and from the fulness of the heart, rather than the fulness of the hand; that a smaller supply may often be a greater charity; and the widow's mite, in the balance of the sanctuary, outweigh the shekels, and perhaps the talents of the opulent." God sees many a benefactor where nothing is given, and many a martyr where no fierce persecution is suffered; yet this is not a reason to excuse us from either

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suffering or giving, when occasion requires, or duty calls. Every christian ought to appropriate a certain part of his property, as a fund for charity. It must not be a mere effect of prevailing custom, but a fixed point of conscience. Acts of beneficence may flow from the momentary impulse of feeling, or the magic power of example; but, where religious principle is not the source, the streams will neither be pure nor permanent. Is it asked what proportion of his property ought a christian to set apart for benevolent purposes? It is impossible to fix the measure by any general rule, because the circumstances of individuals are infinitely varied. Besides the demands upon our charity in the circle of private life, noble institutions, of a public kind, have a claim for support and encouragement. When a man, possessed of opulence, and animated with a sincere desire to glorify God, and benefit his fellow-men, begins seriously to reflect on his circumstances and obligations, he can scarcely fail to ask himself, "How shall I turn the talents intrusted to me to the best use? How can I effect the greatest good by the means placed at my command?" Every one must see that these queries are of high practical importance; opening a vast and interesting field of discussion, which might occupy volumes, rather than the pages of a brief essay. All, therefore, that I shall now attempt, is to advert to the two modes of exercising charity above referred to.

In the circle of private life, a man of benevolence, blessed with wealth, should not forget to assist the industrious poor, especially to relieve the sick; and a concern to promote their spiritual welfare ought invariably to accompany the supply of their temporal wants. The ignorant

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must be instructed, the careless admonished, the penitent encouraged, the wavering established, the backslider reclaimed, and the mourner comforted. The same stock of means will generally go much farther, and be more efficient, from the hands of the master, than when they are conveyed through the medium of servants and almoners. Personally visiting the abodes of indigence and wretchedness, blends condescension with compassion, and operates as a powerful charm on the minds of the lower classes. A man of this high order, by a thousand kind offices, a thousand generous efforts, becomes the resource of want, the refuge of misery, in the neighbourhood where his lot is cast; the blessing of him who was ready to perish comes upon him, and he causes the widow's heart to sing for joy.—Perhaps it may be here asked, whether it is commendable, or blameable, to give to common beggars. I cannot follow out this question in all its bearings, though it certainly merits attention. Few will deny, because the fact is notorious, that beggars are a set of worthless profligates, the very refuse and scum of society; that they are usually associated in bands, and trained to the most expert art of deceiving by specious frauds and falsehoods; that it is common for them to collect the spoil which they obtain in their partly mendicant and partly predatory excursions, and consume it in the most riotous and disgusting excess. Now can he who knows that his property is a sacred trust, deposited in his hands to do good, satisfy himself that it is well employed, when bestowed upon wanton vagrants, liars, and thieves? Is it not, in reality, giving a bounty to idleness, and laying a tax on industry? For whatever is granted to support these

clamorous and vile harpies, must be subtracted from the fund which ought to assist the poor of our own vicinity. A tradesman, in one of the towns in the south of England, has recently stated in the newspapers, that, not long ago, he offered to every beggar who entered his shop a shilling, to water the pavement and street before his door, yet only two out of eighty accepted the offer. But it were easy to collect volumes of facts on this subject, which carry far more force than any reasoning. "Still," an objector says, "shall I, then, spurn half-naked and destitute creatures from my door? Will not the habit of refusing relief, when earnestly implored at my hand, blunt the finer sensibilities of the heart? If only one in a hundred of these wretched mendicants should be a deserving object, is it not better to assist the vicious, than leave that one neglected?" In reply, it may be affirmed, that indiscriminate giving tends to multiply the number of vagrants, and eventually increase, rather than diminish their misery; that christian charity obeys the mandates of conscience more than the sudden and variable movements of feeling; and that the objects of real and known distress are too thickly scattered around, to allow us to lavish away our means in random and casual alms. Such as grant that the great mass of beggars is incorrigibly corrupt, and spreads a deadly taint through the lower part of the community, are glaringly inconsistent, when they help to swell and diffuse this noisome and putrescent mass, merely because it is presumed a few particles of honesty and moral worth are mingled in it.

In assisting orphans, widows, and poor families in distress, though it is best, where it is practicable, for persons to distribute their bounty themselves, yet

there are many cases, doubtless, in which faithful agents may be properly employed. The following act of princely liberality is recorded by a friend, concerning the late excellent Richard Reynolds, Esq. When he resided at Colebrook Dale, in the year 1795, he addressed a letter to some friends in London, stating the impression made on his mind by the distresses of the community, and desiring them to draw upon him for such sum as they might think proper. They complied with his request, and drew, in a very short time, to the extent of eleven thousand pounds. It appeared, however, that they had not yet taken due measure of his liberality; for, in the course of a few months, he again wrote, stating that his mind was not easy, and his coffers were still too full. In consequence of which, they drew for nine thousand pounds more. A minister, in Bristol, speaking of this eminent philanthropist, says; "So far was he from being inflated with the pride of wealth, that he spoke the genuine sentiments of his heart, when he said to a friend, who applied to him with a case of distress, 'My talent is the meanest of all talents—a little sordid dust; but the man in the parable, who had but one talent, was accountable; and for the talent that I possess, humble as it is, I also am accountable to the great Lord of all.'"

⁴¹ Such men make wealth a fountain,
whence proceeds
A stream of noble and heroic deeds."

In reference to public institutions, a conscientious person needs, especially at this time, to exercise a discriminating judgment, in dispensing his benevolence. Every society which has splendid patronage, is not under wise management, even when the avowed object is good. Benevolent societies are now so nume-

rous among us, that it is almost impossible for those who are in comparatively affluent circumstances to assist them all. It has, therefore, by consequence, become a very important and necessary sort of casuistry, to determine which have the strongest and best claims; and this cannot be fairly settled, without knowing both their principles and their proceedings. I shall not now pursue this train of thought, but only remark, that many reasons may be urged against the custom of leaving large bequests for the support of charitable institutions. Not that all posthumous charity proceeds from wrong motives, or false principles. Many a good man bequeaths his property to public uses, who abhors the mercenary doctrine of popery, and entertains not the remotest idea of compounding with heaven for his sins. It is, however, an undeniable fact, by recent legislative investigation brought fully to light, that almost all our public schools, and other benevolent institutions of long standing, have been shamefully perverted. He who has not turned his attention to this subject, and wishes to step behind the screen, and see abuses which have accumulated for ages, needs only read, in the well-written pamphlet of Mr. Brougham, the details of evidence lately given before the Committee of the House of Commons. What was originally left for the poor has been seized by the affluent, or given up to their voracious dependents, and unprincipled retainers. Trustees and visitors have played into each other's hands, while every maxim of law and equity has been trampled in the dust, and every civil right and sacred obligation, essential to the well-being of the community, sacrificed at the shrine of avarice. Indeed, the money left to be disposed of in public

charities has been so generally diverted into private channels, and the selfish have had recourse to so many frauds, evasions, and subterfuges, to compass their object, that a conscientious man ought surely to pause, before he erects and endows a school, an alms-house, or an asylum. This subject is worthy of particular attention from those wealthy persons who, having no descendants, and being liberally disposed, design to grant, by will, large sums for benevolent purposes. If history is, as it hath been defined, philosophy teaching by example, it would be well if such persons derived a few lessons from it to guide their conduct. Instead of leaving their property to be embanked and shut up in a sort of stagnant reservoirs, which, in the lapse of years, are likely to become the very receptacles of corruption, how much better to make it circulate in a thousand living streams, and fructify the country under their own eyes! Let us suppose, for example, a man to retire from business with twenty thousand pounds, and having neither children, nor near relatives, he resolves, while he lives, to spend the interest chiefly in doing good, and leave the capital at his death, to be invested in some liberal and local institution; I would say to him, "Your posthumous charity may be well-intended, but it is almost sure to fail of its object; for though the first trustees should be men of integrity, their successors will probably be of a widely different character. Will you, then, put your riches into a form so liable, and even so likely, to be perverted, when it is in your power to employ them for the direct benefit of mankind? Why not invest your wealth principally in annuities; and, instead of giving away, as you now do, five hundred a year, you may then give thrice

that sum? Thus you will sow the seed of your bounty with your own hand, and if you see not all its fruit come to maturity, you will watch its growth, and confidently anticipate the harvest."

DOMESTIC CONVERSATION.

No. III.

STILL regarding the intercourse of social life, in its influence on character not yet formed, an evil of considerable magnitude presents itself to attention. It is an omission; one which is not unfrequent, but by no means trivial, or unworthy of serious thought; a neglect of so directing conversation, as to afford repeated counteractions to the evil in spirit and sentiment which a youth is in danger of imbibing from his reading and intercourse.

The notion entertained by some good people, that they can so educate their children, as that they shall be strangers to evil, is perfectly chimerical. Whatever will prevent an increase of the knowledge of it, or of familiarity with it, is invaluable; but to proceed on the assumption of ignorance is a serious error, for the spring of mischief is within, and however hidden by a natural amiableness, and checked in its effects by circumstances, yet it exists, and must produce results. The fountain may be so overhung with the foliage of shrubs around it, and its murmurings so broken by the plants thickly set within its bed, that it may neither fix the eye, nor awaken the ear of the passing traveller; but as he pursues his way, he will soon find the waters escaped from their concealment, and spread over surrounding lands. The illustration may be scarcely compatible; but suppose the fountain to be a spring of poisoned waters, and it will be correct.

It may, indeed, be fairly doubt-

ed, whether an education of a too secluded kind does not expose the youth to a sudden, and, therefore, too powerful irruption of temptation in after life.

But, to return to the gleanings which a young and restless inquirer will gather from the world's depravity. Every one, favoured in early life with the instruction of pious parents, can remember the effect that some book of a worldly character had in producing an undefinable feeling, which operated, perhaps, for some time, in secret opposition to religious feeling. For instance; when, in the course of his early classical studies, he met with the story of Cæsar's valorous ambition, or Pompey's bold decision of character, or with the tale of any other of the desperate and deified heroes of antiquity, and mixing up with it no small portion of romantic feeling, he has fancied that it must be a much finer thing to be like these great men, than like religious people; and this has given a distaste to their company, and to the Bible, and the sabbath.

The "*odi profanum vulgus*" of Horace, is the breathing spirit of the classics; and its strength is but little impaired in transmission to the pages of encomiasts and imitators. It is a spirit readily caught by a youth, and is imparted and encouraged by the far greater part of our elegant literature. It strikes in with a propensity in human nature, which, perhaps, of the more refined class of depravity, is the earliest in its operation—the love of glory, and the pride of distinction. The mythology of Greece and Rome may do little or no injury. It is sufficiently ridiculous to prevent its having an influence on the sentiments. But the tone of feeling produced by a contemplation of most of their renowned men, and by the

applauses of the learned, bestowed in every successive age, gradually erects in the mind of a lad, especially if it be of an ardent and poetic cast, a standard of excellence which, if it does not neutralize, he will feel to disaccord with that which the New Testament presents, and to which christians refer.

For a time, this may extend no farther than to the feelings; and it is in stopping its progress at this point, that domestic conversation may prove invaluable.—Through this medium, truth may be presented with such recurring force to him, that the conscience and the understanding will by degrees be subjected to its power, and the classics will be brought down to their proper place. They will be admired and studied, as affording valuable knowledge, enriching the fancy, and purifying the taste, but will not be suffered to govern the heart, in opposition to the paramount authority of revelation.

But in the absence of these checks, from a want of intercourse with the circle of a religious family, or from neglect on the part of those who compose it, the feeling may ripen into sentiment. Its very existence disposes the mind to retreat from the spirit of the gospel, produces a sense of incompatibility between this new principle and the ruling influence of the cross, and, at last, a decision to follow the mighty dead in the track of glory, rather than to tread in the steps of the sect every where spoken against.—Many authors, whom a literary youth must read, will most directly aid such a decision. We can easily conceive of this feeling acquiring great strength, and operating powerfully in the decisions of the heart, from meeting with a passage like the following, in the Letters of Sir Thomas Fitzosborne, who, after blaming

christian writers for depreciating human nature, that is, for insisting on the great scripture doctrine of human depravity, adds, "Methinks it would be more for the interests of virtue, to represent her congenial, as congenial she surely is, with our make, and agreeable to our untainted constitution of soul, to prove that every deviation from moral rectitude is an opposition to our native bias, and contrary to those characters of dignity which the Creator has universally impressed upon the mind. This, at least, was the principle which many of the ancient philosophers laboured to inculcate, as there is not, perhaps, any single topic in ethics that might be urged with more truth, or greater efficacy."

This may serve as an example of the insidious error spread through a considerable portion of our literature. Here there seems to be an amiable, and it may be admitted, honest concern for the interests of virtue, a reference to man's original dignity, and then an assumption contrary to all the authority of sacred evidence, that man is not by nature depraved, a censure on those who speak of him as such, including, thus, a virtual denial of the system of divine grace; and a reference to the example of ancient sages, with an air which seems to say, from these there can be no ulterior appeal. With respect to the closing sentiment of the extract, the christian reader will inquire, with the nervous and admirable Foster, "Why, then, is not the philosopher about his business?" and will feel perfectly satisfied, from facts, as to the efficiency of such means to accomplish the ends proposed.

A young person, however, who should read such a passage, with the predisposition already supposed, would, unless he received from others, to whom he paid

considerable deference, a judicious and steady counteraction of its influence, be in considerable danger of injury; to which he would be the more exposed, since his understanding would rather be misled, than the prejudices of education assaulted.

I know not if the feelings here described, as arising in the perusal of ancient literature, be too philosophical and heroic to be attributed to a youth. There are many to whom they may not belong. Classic tales may not thus have affected them. But the principle, drawn from some source, has dwelt, at some period, in every bosom.

It has arisen, perhaps, more frequently from modern biography; such, for instance, as Chatterton's, or any work in which a young literary adventurer is made to despise all mankind, save only the few high-minded geniuses with which the world has been favoured; and with this, as in the case of the wretched young man referred to, to affect a laugh at religion, and be very sarcastic, and very superior to popular prejudices. Now the natural tendency of a young reader is towards a sensation of triumph in the person of his hero; and the thought recurs to him, as he turns the pages—"Is it not possible that I may be one of this number of noble beings? I should, at least, like to be such." And then, when he comes to his father's table, or receives the invaluable instructions of a pious mother, he will, for a time, feel dissatisfied, as though he were now to be teased with subjects below all these grand thoughts and purposes, and even opposite to them; and when hearing the conversation of serious individuals, he seems to say to himself, 'You are not of the number that think and feel as I do; you are not of the superior race;' and thinking immediately of some sentiment or expression

of his conceited young philosopher, feels his dislike increased, and his pride confirmed.

All this has passed, and will pass again in the breast of many a reading and thinking youth; and if not counteracted, will probably obtain a high share of influence. It is not likely to be counteracted by other books; because, in this state of mind, it is not probable that he will have patience to read works of an opposite character. They will not be the objects of his choice; they will not have his admiring perusal. It is at home all this must be met. But it may never be discovered by parental watchfulness. It may be the struggling for dominion in the masters of the soul, a commotion in the little invisible kingdom within. If, therefore, conversation be not occasionally so guided, as naturally to meet such emotions; if the existence of this, or similar evils, be not assumed, and the influence of elder individuals exerted accordingly, a depraved principle may strengthen unseen, till its sway becomes unlimited.

But the pious individual I have supposed thus retracing his own early history, can also remember how all this pompous structure of pride and error did actually melt away in the youthful breast, and left him to be ashamed of it, before the strong and useful sentiments he heard from the lips that drop wisdom. How, after he heard a serious and affectionate descant upon the infinite majesty and glory of the Son of God, and his compassion for sinners, his authority over the conscience, his omniscience in scrutinizing it, and his coming to judge the secrets of the heart and actions of the life, all this reverence for gifted vice, and a haughty rejection of the gospel, vanished before the omnipotence of truth, as the airy ghosts of the

night are said to flee at the first approach of the sun, the progress of whose light they cannot arrest.

The writer well remembers, when quite a boy, spending a leisure hour or two, in carelessly looking over the volumes of a father's library. In this roving search, he lighted on Paine's *Age of Reason*, and, as he stood, read on through the first eight or ten pages. The style of thought was new to a lad, and he was deeply fixed over the poisonous lines, when his father entered, and seeing the volume, required it to be given up, and prohibited its being read. This was, of course, obeyed. But a sentiment had been caught. The impudent familiarity with which the vulgar infidel speaks of the sacred writers shocked at first; but the insinuation, that none but servile spirits allowed their authority, and that it was a proof of nobleness to deny it, did mischief. It appealed to an evil principle of the heart—its pride; and the feeling is well recollected, 'Then it is bold and manly to be above these prejudices; and why should not *I* be bold enough?' and it was indulged for a few days. But it met with too many shocks, in domestic intercourse, to live long; and a parent's well-directed remarks respecting the authority of the divine word, and the wicked sophistry of infidels, soon led a youthful mind to see that there is no manliness in bold denials in the face of evidence.

Now, in this case, the writer may be pardoned for thus alluding to his own experience, for he can better trace its progress. There was a spirit suddenly produced, at complete variance with all the habits of education, and impressions of previous years. It prepared the mind, so long as it lasted, to receive favourably other attacks upon revelation, and weakened the power of addresses founded

on the scriptures. The heart would have brought, to every inquiry on such subjects, a predisposition, as silly as it was wicked. It needed, then, the infusion of some counteracting spirit; and, under the divine blessing, soon received it. The great themes of eternal truth, the moral evidence and power of the gospel, brought by repeated and pointed remarks before the mind, soon threw up a barrier to the advance of this foul fiend of incipient infidelity. But how far in the path of error such a spirit may conduct a youth, while undetected or unchecked, none who know the heart of man will venture to predict.

It may, perhaps, be felt that these remarks would be more fitly applied to a system of instruction, than to conversation. It may be replied, that an attempt to counteract evil influence is more likely to be successful, while connected with the free interchange of thoughts and language, than when one party is to sit as a disciple, and the other as a preceptor. If a youth, having adopted a sentiment, comes into your presence, glowing with what he thinks a fine feeling, and proud of a wrong but favourite notion, and you immediately repel it with an air of authority, you may extort an homage to yourself, but you put his mind in a state of defence with reference to the subject. There is something polemical in the nature of man. By such an act, you have challenged this propensity; and though the lad may not avow it before you, he will listen, and perhaps leave you, accepting the challenge, that is, revolving his favourite opinion more fondly, with the superadded determination to try if he cannot master you; and having espoused it, will feel that he loves it the more, since his right to do so has been called in question. And it matters not whether you ever

hear of his decision; it is the same in its effect on his mind. But, in conversation, the truth which you wish to impress comes to him in the same way, as the opposing evil came, as an object of interest; like that it may be made to secure his attention, by seeming to be casual, and not starting up with the rod of command, and the frown of an opposer to compel subjection.

Here the writer would be understood as referring to points which, though important, are not so immediately obvious in their influence, and in which the intellect of the corrected person has a right to be satisfied. As to every case of moral delinquency, the duty of the christian parent is, undoubtedly, the solemn interference of authority; because, in such cases, the ground for it already exists in the dictates of conscience, and in the divine command. The parent, neglecting this, is in danger of sharing the curse of Eli, of whom God said, "I will judge his house for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not." This is a high and paramount relative duty, not to be disregarded without incurring a weighty load of guilt, and introducing to the domestic circle a long train of protracted evils.

But the ideas suggested are applicable to the dangers connected with a polite education. As society is now formed, and as the human mind advances in knowledge, the stores of learning must be open to the young; and when they are taught, they will continue to study. Then, as they wander, self-directed, through the pantheon, and the temples, amidst the statues and structures of antiquity, the schools of her ancient philosophy, and the halls of her sages, and rove in delightful freedom over all the enchant-

ed scenery of classic ground, we must remember that many enemies of the cross of Christ are lurking around them, and we are required to watch, that they become not the dupes of a "philosophy, falsely so called."

By a habit of observation, wise and well-timed instructions, and a study to convey them through the unassuming but effective medium of conversation, the members of the domestic circle will derive mutual benefit, may check the strides of evil, transmit blessings to a succeeding race, and may expect the accompanying influences of Him who has promised, that the conscientious effort to do good, and to advance his glory, shall not be in vain.

FILIUS.

NO. V.—ESSAYS ON TRUTH.

(Continued from page 596.)

If it be the design of language to inform, to convince, or to persuade others, respecting something that we may wish them to know, to believe, or to practise, clearness of expression should in all cases be carefully preserved. If a person, intending to convey his sentiments by writing or speaking, were to make use of words, the meaning of which is doubtful, or put them together in a manner not easily understood, little or no benefit could be derived from his instructions, but the design of speech would, in a great measure, be lost. The impression made upon the mind by the sentiments communicated, would necessarily be enfeebled by the faint manner in which they must be perceived, while the pleasure or usefulness of such perceptions would, in many cases, be prevented by perplexing doubts or tedious disputations. But where the language of a discourse is clear and unequivocal, and when the subject discoursed

about, is at the same time easy to be understood, the truth may at once be perceived in all its lustre, and the arguments adduced, or the virtues recommended, have their due weight to convince the understanding, or affect the heart.

In the composition of a book, designed to communicate the most important instructions, it is, therefore, highly necessary that every thing ambiguous or doubtful should be avoided. The more its contents rise in importance, and the greater consequences are involved in a clear discernment of its principles, the more important and indispensable will plainness and perspicuity of language necessarily become. Every appearance of doubtful meaning, and every misconception of an obscure term, will create anxieties in the mind of those who may feel themselves to be in doubt, and may occasion, on the part of others, evil surmisings or angry disputes.

Hence it has been frequently observed, that, if the sacred scriptures were indeed a revelation of the mind and will of God, and were designed for so important a purpose as the rule of our faith and conduct, their language should have been, not only incapable of misconstruction, but plain and easy to be understood. Instead of this being the case, however, it is undeniable that the phraseology of the Old and New Testament is, in many places, very obscure, even to the learned reader, and has, in all ages of the christian church, occasioned diversity of sentiment and continual controversies. The existence of such obscurity, in the writings of St. Paul, is expressly acknowledged by the Apostle Peter; and it may therefore be assumed as an unquestionable fact. Do not, then, "the general obscurity of the sacred

writings, the peculiar difficulties of the apostolical epistles, and the discordant opinions of the christian world occasioned by them, form a very serious objection against the supposed inspiration of the sacred writers, and greatly diminish their authority as the test of truth, and the claim which they may have upon our confidence. There is something in this argument, so clear in the premises which it assumes, and so plausible in the inference which it deduces from them, that the inquisitive and ingenuous, who have not had an opportunity of viewing the subject in a proper light, are liable to have their faith shaken by its influence, and their regard for the word of God greatly weakened, or even totally annihilated. We propose, therefore, in the present essay, to direct our attention to this subject, that the apparent ambiguities of the sacred scriptures may be shown to involve no impeachment of their authority, as the rule of our faith and practice.

It is, in the first place, objected, that scripture language in general abounds in obscurities, and contains many passages and modes of expression which are too metaphorical for people of limited information to understand. Whether we direct our attention to the Old Testament, or to the New, we can scarcely read a chapter, or a paragraph, without meeting with some expression which seems to convey a doubtful meaning, and requires close thought and inquiry, before the true sense of the writer can be perceived. But if the scriptures contained a divine revelation, and were intended to be received as the directory of our belief and practice, in the great business of religion; it seems reasonable to suppose that every thing ambiguous and obscure, would have been avoided.

Now, in reply to this objection, we admit that the essentials of a revelation, communicated to the world by a written testimony, ought to be clear and indubitable, whether those essentials be articles of faith, or rules of conduct. Every view we can take of the divine character, forbids us to imagine that he would leave the terms of our salvation in uncertainty, or permit the messengers of his will to convey the most necessary instructions in ambiguous or doubtful language. The same considerations which rendered the gospel requisite to human happiness, render it equally necessary that the book, in which the great facts and principles of the gospel are recorded, should be written in a style which the serious and attentive reader, though he be poor and illiterate, may easily understand.

Let us inquire, then, whether or not the scriptures answer to this character, and whether the obscurities charged upon them be in reality a fault. And, if this inquiry be properly pursued, it will convince us that, whatever may be said of the ambiguity of scripture, every truth and every duty of essential moment has been expressed in the plainest terms, and conveyed in a style the meaning of which is level to ordinary capacities. In many parts of the Old and New Testament, there are certainly numerous metaphors and allusions, of the beauty or real import of which many readers can form little or no idea. The subjects, moreover, to which the sacred writers sometimes allude, are in their own nature incomprehensible, or else that which may be known of them, has been only partially revealed. The labours of criticism, likewise, have found out in the different copies of the original, handed down from remote antiquity, many va-

rious readings and verbal inaccuracies, by which the beauty and clearness of some passages have been considerably impaired. But the whole of these difficulties together, great and numerous as they may seem, have neither obscured the lustre of a single doctrine, nor weakened the force of a solitary command. Any man of common understanding, who reads the Bible with a serious and humble mind, will be able, with the divine blessing, to acquire, from its instructions, all necessary and saving knowledge. Though great talents and a thorough acquaintance with ancient languages, and indeed every species of knowledge, may be useful in proving the authenticity, and in explaining some peculiarities of the sacred volume, they must never be deemed necessary to a clear perception of its leading truths. The view it gives us of the divine character and government, the state and destination of man, the way of salvation, the character of the Saviour, and the obligations of r'l to whom the gospel is addressed, are written as with a sun-beam, and exhibited in forms of language, which it seems difficult to mistake. The knowledge of these grand points, instead of being confined to the learned, or acquired by those only, whose time and talents are wholly consecrated to the ministerial work, has often been obtained by persons in the humble walks of society, who understood no language but their own, and had no commentary to explain the Bible, except the Bible which explains itself. In short, the word of God conveys the most valuable instructions in a clear style, and is able to make us wise unto salvation, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

To make the verbal obscurities of sacred writ, an objection against the truth and authority

of the scriptures themselves, will appear unreasonable and absurd, if we consider the *time* when they were written, the *persons* who wrote them, the *people* for whose benefit they were originally designed, the *subjects* contained in them, and the *circumstances* and state of society which influenced their authors in the composition. All these considerations, if we had time to examine them, would tend to show that the sacred writers, both of the Old and New Testament, used a style the most appropriate and becoming, and that those parts, which now seem encompassed with obscurity, were not only clear to the people to whom their writings were addressed, but in many cases were highly beautiful and impressive. Human language, in every nation, is subject to many variations, according to the state of civilization and learning, in the different events and revolutions which take place. Hence it is well known, that many books, written in our tongue a few centuries ago, are now exceedingly obscure, and the greatest care is necessary to find out their true meaning. How much, then, must this be the case with books written in a different language, and in a different part of the world, two or three thousand years ago, in a state of society, and in reference to events and circumstances, of which only a partial knowledge can be acquired in the present day. Instead of being surprised that some or even many obscurities are found in the sacred writings, it should rather excite our wonder, that so large a portion of their contents is distinguished and deservedly admired for its unaffected simplicity and clearness, force, and beauty of expression.

We conclude, therefore, that reproaches or objections adduced against the scriptures, on the

ground of verbal obscurities, would betray great ignorance, prejudice, or depravity. It is like supposing, or taking it for granted, that the books in question, though written at a period so remote, ought to have been precisely adapted to the *age*, the *sect*, the *class*, or the *individuals* by whom such objections may be made. This, however, is an absolute impossibility, since those expressions, which in one age, or by one individual, may be viewed and censured as inconsistent with good taste, would, at another period, or by other persons be admired and extolled as the most luminous and beautiful phraseology. Besides, those ancient metaphors and dark allusions, in which these difficulties originate, are essential proofs of the genuineness and high antiquity of the books in which they are found, and could not possibly be expunged from them, in favour of a modern style, without obscuring their authenticity, and exposing them to the assaults of infidelity, ridicule, or contempt.

If, then, we consider the moral end to be answered by divine revelation, and the state of mind necessary for the study of truth, and the discharge of duty, it will appear evident, that the scriptures possess precisely that degree of perspicuity which is proper. The New Testament in particular, which was designed for more extensive circulation, is written in a style which is best adapted to the subject, and the force and energy of which may not only be transfused into every language, but are well suited to the great bulk of mankind. While the peculiar beauties and most impressive melody of Grecian eloquence can exist only in their original form, the spirit and excellencies of the scripture style may happily be communicated in every tongue. Instead of cherish-

ing a secret wish, therefore, that the Bible had been written in a different kind of style, let us rather admire the suitableness and wisdom by which its inspired compositions have been marked.

Even the obscurities of scripture, instead of weakening its authority, become an internal and imperishable evidence of their veracity, tacitly confirming the whole of their contents. The difficulties we feel, moreover, in their perusal, instead of causing murmurs, doubts, or discouragements, should rather teach us the most important lesson of humility, should check the self-confidence and self-sufficiency of reason, and show the necessity of divine light and heavenly instructions. Thus, also, the labours of criticism and study, arising from this source, will exercise and enlarge those powers, which it was the design of christianity to improve, and by so doing, will become a secondary means of accomplishing the great purposes of religion.

EVANGELICAL FAITH AND REPENTANCE REQUIRED OF THE UNREGENERATE.

WHETHER or not evangelical faith and repentance are required of the unregenerate, is a question which has often been agitated among professors of christianity. But whatever respectability may attach to the character of some persons who have taken the negative side of this question, it will not be difficult to prove that, from their sentiments, the most absurd and dangerous consequences naturally flow. To state the principal of those consequences is the intention of the present paper. It may not be improper, however, to mention, in the first place, what is intended by the two terms—FAITH and REPENTANCE.

Faith is the belief of the testimony of God, as recorded in the sacred scriptures, respecting the state of man by nature, the way of salvation through Jesus Christ, &c. and is invariably attended, on the part of the believer, with the renunciation of self-dependence, and an unreserved trust in the work of Christ, as the sole ground of acceptance with God. Let it be remembered, that by faith, the writer does not mean a persuasion of interest in the righteousness of Christ. When the term is designed to convey the idea of appropriation or assurance, he conceives that it properly belongs to the figure metonymy. It would be strange indeed, were we to assert that those who are living regardless of divine things, are nevertheless required to believe that they are interested in the special favour of God, and safe for eternity. They are required to form a very different, or rather, a directly opposite conclusion, viz. that they are in imminent danger, and that unless they flee for refuge to the hope set before them, they must inevitably perish.

Evangelical repentance is a real sorrow for sin, as an offence against the purity and goodness of God, accompanied by an earnest desire, and firm resolution, by the grace of God, to forsake it.

Now duty and sin must ever stand directly opposed to each other. Whatever it is our duty to do, it must be a sin to neglect; and whatever it is a sin to neglect, it must be our duty to do. If, for instance, temperance is a duty, intemperance must be a sin; and if intemperance is a sin, temperance must be a duty. "Sin," it is said by an authority, which we dare not dispute, "is the transgression of the law, but where there is no law, there is no transgression." Hence it would

appear, that where there is no duty to be performed, there can be no obligations to be violated; and that under these circumstances, sin can have no existence.

Admitting then that faith and repentance are not required of the unregenerate, we perceive at once that this is precisely the same as saying, that, with regard to them at least, unbelief and impenitence are not sins; and that the unconverted may, with perfect innocence, give God the lie, condemn the work of Christ, and place all their dependence upon themselves for salvation; that they may, without contracting guilt, exult in those practices which have in general been deemed sinful, treat the moral perfections of God with contempt, and boldly avow their determination to persist in the gratification of the most depraved lusts.

If while in a state of nature, we are not required to believe the testimony of God in the scriptures, then we are allowed, without the possibility of contracting the least guilt, to reject the scriptures altogether, and to embrace, if we please, the dogmas of deism or atheism. This is a very obvious deduction; for if faith is not required, unbelief cannot be a sin: in a moral point of view, there can be nothing wrong where no obligation is violated, because, in that case, no guilt can possibly be contracted.

Again; if, while in a state of nature, evangelical repentance is not required as a duty, then whatever is implied in hardness of heart, and impenitence of mind, is perfectly void of all moral evil; the most confirmed habits of vice, and the most ardent devotion to what has been denominated sinful courses, must be no more contrary to our obliga-

tions, than the deepest contrition for our past conduct, and the most sincere resolutions with regard to amendment. In short, if the unregenerate are not required to repent, or, in other words, if they are not required to be truly sorry for their sins, to reform their lives, and to devote themselves to the service of God, then they are allowed to glory in what the scriptures would call their shame, and to live to the full gratification of their most depraved and vicious propensities.

The writer of this paper is fully persuaded that the relation in which we stand to God, and the moral perfections of his nature, must, in the very nature of things, render it our duty to give implicit and entire credit to his word in all its parts, and to exercise sincere and deep contrition of soul for all that has been morally wrong in our dispositions and conduct. God was our Creator; he is our daily benefactor; and has manifested the most astonishing goodness in the gift of his dear Son: his law, which we are taught to believe is a perfect transcript of his moral attributes, is holy, just, and good; he cannot lie, and must invariably prove faithful to all his declarations; and yet, notwithstanding all this, according to the views of some persons, while unregenerate, we are under no obligation to believe his testimony, nor to feel any compunction for these tempers, and feelings, and practices, which are in direct opposition to his nature, and to the holy laws which he has been pleased to promulgate.

It would appear strange that in the sacred scriptures, the unregenerate should be so frequently distinguished from the people of God, by the term—*unbelievers*—if their unbelief constituted no part of their culpability. Surely,

ly, it would have been better to have designated them by some appellation which would have been more calculated to arouse their fears. The term, *unbelief*,—if faith is not required as a duty, carries with it its own apology. The want of that right state of mind, from whence faith and repentance must ever proceed, forms its own justification.

It would appear a singular circumstance, if faith and repentance should become duties, and unbelief and impenitence should become sins *only*, when we commence believers, and first begin to feel contrition for the obliquity of our dispositions and conduct. Were we to assert that it became our duty to discharge the debts we had contracted, *only* when we began to feel disposed to do so, and that there was no obligation with respect to their discharge, till they were actually discharged, we should certainly expose ourselves to ridicule. Equally preposterous, however, are those sentiments which it is the intention of this paper to oppose. According to the views of those persons who have adopted the Hyper-Calvinistic scheme, the surest way of escaping the sins of unbelief and impenitence, is to persist in our infidelity and hardness of heart, for as soon as we become believers, and repent, we become liable to contract guilt by unbelief and impenitence, and not till then. This is an obvious inference from the sentiments of some who please themselves with the idea of superior orthodoxy, and clearer mental irradiations, and who would assign the name Arminian or legalist to any one who should endeavour to disprove the correctness of their incongruous notions.

It is said, that “without faith it is impossible to please God.” Hence it is very evident, that if faith is not a duty required of

the unregenerate, so far as it respects them, there is no such thing as duty towards God, unless it is their duty to do those things which are displeasing in his sight. It is said also, that, "whatsoever is not of faith, is sin." But according to the views here alluded to, that cannot be true, for how can any particular circumstance, belonging to an action, render that action morally wrong, unless that circumstance likewise partakes of the same quality? If faith is not required of the unregenerate, how can the want of faith constitute any action sinful? If that state of mind from which any particular line of conduct proceeds, is not wrong in the sight of God, it would be difficult to conceive how those actions to which it forms the stimulant principle, should be wrong. Hence it would appear, that either faith is required of the unregenerate, or nothing is required—they are not accountable to God for any part of their conduct. But who does not shudder at such consequences as these? That must be sinful which would give God the lie, would reject the only provisions of infinite mercy, and would harden itself against a Being of unbounded compassion and goodness.

The great error of those, who attach the name of Calvin to a system which Calvin would have rejected with abhorrence, arises from their not properly considering the nature of that inability for acceptable spiritual exercises, of which man, in a state of nature, is the subject. It is true, that of ourselves we are unable to think a good thought, or to perform an holy action; but it can never be right to suppose that this inability is of such a nature as to extenuate guilt, or to destroy obligation. So far from this being the case, the want of a right disposition towards God,

which constitutes the inability of fallen creatures for holy and spiritual duties, is the highest aggravation, or the very essence of their guilt. Love to God is the primary duty required of all rational creatures, and without which nothing can be acceptable with him. Now the opposite of this—enmity—is precisely that which forms the inability of man, in reference to the various duties which he owes to his Creator. Man, while destitute of the renewing influence of the Holy Spirit, is unable to please God, *only* because he is indisposed to do so, in the way which infinite wisdom has thought proper to appoint for that purpose. Under these circumstances, all his attempts at making his peace with God, are merely so many acts of rebellion against the merciful provisions of infinite goodness for the recovery of his lapsed creatures. Of how much importance is it, therefore, that we should endeavour to attain correct views as to the way of salvation; so that, on the one hand, we do not, by the adoption of a legalizing system, attempt to supersede, either in whole or in part, the necessity of a sacrificial propitiation of infinite value; or, on the other, imbibe those crude notions, which, under the idea of exalting the sovereignty, the freeness, and the efficacy, of divine grace, contract the bounds of moral obligation, extenuate the guilt of man, and by that means actually depreciate, in its application to us, the value of that redemption which is in Christ Jesus. W. E.

ON THE ELECTION OF MINISTERS.

To the Editors.

Gentlemen;—

SINCE, perhaps, it might be regarded as not belonging to my

province, to engage in theological discussion, probably I should not have addressed you on the present occasion, had it not been for an observation made by Mr. Bidlake, which your correspondent, Senex, quotes in his communication, inserted in your Number for August; namely, that the prevailing custom, at the choosing of ministers among the Independents, is, to submit the election, first, to the members of the church, and, subsequently, to the mere seat-holders, or the rest of the congregation. Upon this, your aged correspondent seems to found the conclusion, that the seat-holders, or "subscribers, may reject the proposed minister." As I do not happen to know that part of the country in which your young friend, Mr. Bidlake, resides, I by no means intend to question the correctness of his statement, so far as it respects the south-west counties, when I remark that, although from the nature of my engagements, united with a decided preference of more than twenty years' standing, for the Dissenting mode of worship, and the Congregational system of church-government, my acquaintance with the Independent churches, especially in those districts in which, I believe, Independents are most numerous, is extensive by a sort of necessity, yet I have never known an instance in which, in the election of a pastor, mere seat-holders, or subscribers who were not members, were considered as having a negative vote upon the decisions of the church. As we expect correct views with regard to the "Congregational way," from your valuable miscellany, I should be glad to know, (and I presume the question is of some importance to the denomination in general,) how far this practice is *really prevalent*. Perhaps Senex has mis-

taken the meaning of Mr. Bidlake, and drawn an inference from his remark which he never anticipated.

I should conceive that such a regulation as that which is here alluded to, would be unnecessary, and, in some measure, dangerous; unnecessary, because it is highly improbable that any church would think of choosing a minister who was unacceptable to the principal part of the congregation;—and, with many, attention to this circumstance would be a matter of real necessity: dangerous—because, in many cases, it would almost inevitably lead to the assumption of a more positive authority, and then, in some, it is probable to the election of ministers, not very orthodox or evangelical in sentiment.

I believe it is the invariable custom, on the part of church-members, to consult, and ascertain the views of, at least, the principal seat-holders, or subscribers, previous to the giving of a call, and the propriety and necessity of this your correspondent, W. E., appears fully to admit, though, in one place, (page 115, col. 2,) by adopting scripture phraseology, he may, perhaps, have used terms which seem a little too exclusive, though it is probable that even there nothing is referred to, but simply the *act* of giving a call. He evidently meant to say, there can be little doubt that, whatever influence mere seat-holders may possess, and whatever regard it may be prudent and necessary to pay to their opinion, as a pastor is a *church-officer*, it belongs solely and exclusively to the church to give a call. Whether a candidate is acceptable to the congregation in general, is one of those circumstances which the church has to take into its consideration before it determines upon giving a call, and a circumstance upon which

a call must very much depend; but surely it does not follow, that persons who are not members, either are, or ought to be, the ultimate referees in this important affair.

The question proposed by Senex, "What minister would accept a call to preach to a congregation with five-sixths of which he had no concern?" does not seem to apply, as no person has yet proposed a system that would place a minister in any such circumstances. Were the point really of importance, it would be difficult to ascertain the exact proportion which church-members bear, upon an average, to seat-holders in general, in our numerous congregations, or to seat-holders who are not members. I should hope that the difference is even less than the estimate made by your correspondent, W. E.

In fairness, it is necessary to remark here, that Senex, by a mere oversight, I have no doubt, has mis-stated the estimate made by your other correspondent. Church-members are also in general seat-holders. This circumstance is evidently taken into the account, in the supposition made by W. E.; whereas the explanation given by Senex requires that none of the members should be seat-holders, but that they should be totally, and altogether, a distinct body.

"We know," remarks Senex, "that elders were appointed over every church; but we are not told even that they were chosen by the members of it; only, that the apostles and evangelists ordained them." I should be very sorry to misrepresent the meaning of your correspondent, and am free to admit, that this sentence does not amount to a denial that any thing can be gathered from the New Testament, respecting the important privilege of

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choosing christian pastors; yet I dare not venture to assert that this impression will not be left upon the minds of some persons, upon reading his paper, or that it is not calculated to produce doubts upon this important subject. Senex surely knows that the very passage here alluded to, has very often been adduced in vindication of popular rights with regard to the choice of ministers. It was, therefore, highly desirable that his remark should have contained something more than mere assertion. He must be aware that the term *χειροτονια* has, by many eminent critics and commentators, been understood to convey the idea of popular suffrage signified by the lifting up of the hand.* "But because it is some men's interest," says Dr. Owen,† "to entangle things plain and clear enough in themselves, I shall consider the objection unto this rendition of the words. The whole of it lies against the signification, use, and application of *χειροτονια*. Now although we do not here argue merely from the signification of the word; but from the representation of the matter of fact made in the context; yet I shall observe some things sufficient for the removal of that objection; as,—

1. The native signification of *χειροτονια*, by virtue of its composition, is, to "lift up, or stretch forth the hands," or a hand. And hereunto the LXX. have respect, Isa. lviii. 9, where they render שרר אצבע, "the putting forth of the finger," by *χειροτονια*.

2. The constant use of it in things political or civil, and so, consequently, ecclesiastical, is

* See Erasmus, Calvin, Beza, Vatablus, Stockius, Junius on Bellarmin, (contra 5. lib. 1. cap. 7. annot. 59, 63, and 64.) Doddridge, with many others.

† In his "True Nature of a Gospel Church," chap. iv.

to choose, elect, design, or create any person an officer, magistrate, or ruler, by suffrage, or common consent of those concerned. And this is usually done with [by] making bare the hand and arm, with lifting up, as Aristophanes witnesseth. *Ομως δι χειροτονητοι, εξημισσασαι τοι ιτεροι βραχχιοι.* He is a great stranger unto these things, who knoweth not that among the Greeks, especially the Athenians, from whom the use of this word was borrowed, or taken, *χειροτονια*, was an act, *ολης της εκκλησιας*, of the whole assembly of the people, in the choice of their officers and magistrates. *Χειροτονια* is, by common suffrage, to decree and determine any thing, law, or order; and when applied unto persons, it signifies their choice and designation to office. So it is used in the first sense by Demosthenes, *Orat. in Timoch.* *Ο δημος τας εμας γυναικας χειρ συντηριας τας πολλας εχειροτονει.* "The people confirmed my sayings by their suffrage;" and in the other, *Philip. i.* *Ουτε βουλης, ουτε δημο χειροτονηταυτης αυτοι;* "neither the senate, nor the people, choosing him to his office." So is the passive verb used, "to be created," by suffrage. *Χειροτονια*, was the act of choosing, whose effect was *ψηφισμα*, the determining vote, or suffrage. As many instances of this nature may be produced, as there are reports of calling men unto magistracy in the Greek historians. And all the further compositions of this word do signify, to choose, confirm, or abrogate, by common suffrages.

3. The word is but once more used in the New Testament, 2 Cor. viii. 19, where it plainly signifies election and choice of a person to an employment:—"Who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us."

4. It is acknowledged, that, after this, as the common use of the word, it was applied to sig-

nify the thing itself, and not the manner of doing it. Hence it is used sometimes for the obtaining or collation of authority, or dignity, or magistracy, any manner of way, though not by election: to appoint—to create. But this was by an abusive application of the word. Why such a use of it should be here admitted, no reason can be given. For, in all other places, on such occasions, the apostles did admit, and direct the churches to use their liberty in their choice. So "the apostles and elders, with the *whole church*, sent chosen men of their own company to Antioch," such as they chose by common suffrage for that end; so again, verse 25.—"When I come, whomsoever ye shall approve, them will I send," 1 Cor. xvi. 3. The church chose them, the Apostle sent him "who was also chosen of the churches." 2 Cor. viii. 19. "Look out from among yourselves." Acts vi. 3. If on all these, and the like occasions, the apostles did guide and direct the people in their right and use of their liberty,—what reason is there to depart from the proper and usual signification of the word in this place?

Very far am I from intending to insinuate any suspicion that Senex would deny the legitimacy of these arguments in favour of popular rights, which have been drawn from other passages of scripture. Lest, however, any of your readers, from the manner in which your correspondent has expressed himself, should conceive the idea that those rights have no better foundation than expediency, I beg leave to mention that the privilege in question is defended by a reference to the manner in which Matthias, and the seven deacons, or persons chosen for the purpose of providing for the Grecian widows, were elected; as well as from

certain injunctions in the New Testament, which, without the enjoyment of this right, would be perfectly inappropriate and nugatory. "Even when an apostle was to be chosen in the room of Judas," says Dr. Watts, "the hundred and twenty disciples, of whom eleven were apostles, joined in the choice of two persons, out of which the lot determined one to be an apostle. Acts i. 15, 23. Deacons who manage the secular affairs of the church, were chosen by the people. Acts vi. 3. And still more reasonable it is that elders, or bishops, who have the care of their souls, should be chosen by them that want and desire their instructions in such important concerns."

"Besides, to what purpose are churches exhorted to beware of and reject false teachers, if they have no power of choice." Turner's "*Compendium*," p. 55.

As to the point more particularly in question, would it not be as great a hardship for the members of a church to be forbidden the possession of that minister to whom, of all others, they are the most attached, as for mere seat-holders to have a person introduced of whom they do not approve? And would not the former circumstance be followed, in all probability, by consequences far more injurious, particularly in a spiritual point of view?

If mere seat-holders ought to possess an interdictory voice at the election of a minister, lest a person should be chosen of whom they do not approve, ought they not, upon the same principle, to possess the power of deposition at any future period? The former privilege seems to imply the latter; or, rather, is it not the continuance, under somewhat diffe-

rent circumstances, indeed, of the same power? Perhaps, with respect to a minister who had become unacceptable to the members of the church, your correspondent would reverse the case, and give to mere seat-holders the power of retention.

Upon the whole, though I readily admit that the congregation ought to be particularly regarded at the election of a minister, and, I believe, this is generally done, yet I cannot but think that the right of giving a call properly, and without being subject to any direct control, belongs to the members of the church. This appears to have been an established principle with the Protestant Dissenters, till the rise of two very different denominations—the Unitarians, and the followers of Messrs. Whitfield and Wesley; both of which parties banished from their vocabulary the term church, in its more restricted application, and with it, in their practice, that peculiarity of privilege, the idea of which it had been wont to convey.*

I am sorry that, as to this particular, the sentiments of our forefathers should have been disturbed, unless something more cogent had been urged in defence of the deviation. Surely no conclusive argument can be founded on practicability, real or supposed, against that which has been practised for centuries without difficulty; and many things, it must be admitted, have been

* It is but just to remark, however, that though the Methodists, in appointing the stations of their ministers, or preachers, do not proceed upon the system of the earlier Independents, they assign no power to persons who are not members of any of their societies. This is a deviation which belongs solely to the more regular Dissenters; and to which, if I mistake not, they chiefly owe their liability to declension in orthodoxy and spirituality.

* In his "*Rational Foundation of a Christian Church*," sect. iii.

deemed expedient with regard to religion, which have ultimately proved seriously detrimental to real piety. We find, in the New Testament, an important privilege described as belonging to those persons who are there denominated disciples, or saints. Shall we, from the mere circumstance of certain distinctive terms, such, for instance, as congregation, stated-hearers, subscribers, &c. designating persons separate from church-members, not being used, which, from the nature of things, could scarcely be at all appropriate during the first promulgation of the gospel, attempt to defend the extension of this privilege to individuals, not in general answering to the recorded, and, therefore, I should conceive, the required description of character.

Would not church-members promote the welfare of religion far more effectually, and, consequently, discharge an important duty, by endeavouring, in the spirit of christian affection and zeal, to introduce into their respective societies *all those hearers* who, in the judgment of charity, manifest evidence of real piety, than by a compromise which, in one respect, would lessen the importance and value of church-communion, and which could scarcely fail of increasing, on numerous occasions, the prevalence and potency of mere worldly inducements and motives in matters of the highest spiritual moment?

VIATORIUS MERCATOR.

REVIEW OF BOOKS, &c.

Meditations on the Fall and Rising of St. Peter. By Edward Reynolds, late Lord Bishop of Norwich. A new Edition, with Preface and Life of the Author; and a Recommendation by R. Winter, D. D. 12mo. London: Brown, 1819.

We are always disposed to give a hearty welcome to republications of this kind, and to consider the eagerness with which the works of our earlier evangelists have been, of late years, sought after and reproduced, as auguring well of the state of the public mind. At the same time, we must confess that our views of the general subject are not quite in unison with those of some of our brethren, the superiority of whose judgment we should be inclined fully and cheerfully to allow, if we were satisfied that they had been guided in its exercise by an independent examination, rather than by an acquiescence, whether from indolence or modesty, in commonly received opinions. Unless we are greatly mistaken, there prevails, among men of the present day, a disposition to yield implicitly the intellectual precedence to their pious ancestors, and to assign them an elevation on the mental scale, which moderns must be content to gaze at from a lower level, in utter hopelessness of attaining a

range so lofty and extensive. If we were constrained to admit the general fact, it could only be with considerable qualification; but it is the fairest way to say frankly, that we doubt it altogether. The merits of the question do not depend upon the citation of a few great and justly celebrated names, though even here we might occupy vantage ground; it is a matter of average, and if we were not restrained by feelings of delicacy, we should find no difficulty in proving, by the *appel nominal*, that in ability at least, the evangelical ministers of our own times, not only equal, but transcend their brethren of any former period. We feel ourselves much inclined to pursue this subject through its very extensive ramifications, but for the present we must forbear, and limit ourselves to the indication of a few reasons for the great and merited popularity of those excellent and admirable men whose inestimable value none can be less disposed to extenuate than ourselves.

In the first place, their intellectual faculties, though not, we are persuaded, of a higher order, were more strongly, keenly, and incessantly exercised, than those of the present race of theologians. They were thrown upon wrangling times: almost every question in divinity was then debatable ground, and con-

tested with as much sharpness and tenaciousness as the titles to empires, or the frontiers of kingdoms. The great points of controversy are now considered as either settled or exhausted; and when occasionally mooted, unless when brilliant talents are called into exercise, or extraordinary circumstances are mingled with the discussion, they seldom awaken much attention. But at the periods to which we have referred, the public mind was less generally enlightened, and it was one of the most pressing requisitions of ministerial duty, to guard, with almost captions vigilance, posts and outworks which are now perhaps a little too much neglected, though then exalted into unnecessary importance. Add to this, the trammels frequently imposed by the peculiar forms of disputation then in favour, and we shall have a general notion of a mental discipline calculated to sharpen the wit, if not to elevate and enlarge its range; to give a keen and microscopic glance to the mind's eye, and a certain vigour to what we will venture to call intellectual *muscle*, though possibly not to communicate a greater portion of large and liberal intelligence.

Secondly, the writings of those gifted men to whom we now allude, are marked, in their devotional and practical portions, by an intense and pervading spirituality, which is partly to be referred to the circumstances under which they were composed. We are far from ascribing any general deficiency, in this important quality, to those valuable works, which from time to time come forth from the heads and hearts of those whose secret studies and whose active lives are devoted to the furtherance of man's best interests; but we apprehend that we risk no contradiction in admitting the superiority, in this respect, of the older writers. They lived in or near seasons of persecution, or of uncertainty, and they were driven by the hostility or the turbulence of men, to take refuge with their God. They clung, as for life, to the manifestations of his love, and the testimonies of his presence; and they thought, and spoke, and acted, as men in a state of disengagement from the world, and with their hearts "nigh spher'd in heaven." This world to them had few attractions; their enemies aided the work of grace in hardening them against its fascination; their popularity was among the poor in spirit; their fellowship exclusively with the true followers of Christ, for the mere professor shrunk from the harsh tests of those severer times; and the strength, the wisdom, the zeal, the peace of these worthies of the cross, are well attested by the records which they have left behind.

But in the third place we may state, as a material point in favour of the old divines, that they are in complete possession of the public mind. They come down to us with a hallowed name, and a prescriptive demand upon our veneration. There seems a species of impiety in challenging the smallest item of their claims: the *lex majestatis* repels us from the slightest violation of the immunities of this illustrious commonwealth. Hence their instructions strike with the two-fold force of their own intrinsic weight, and the high character of the monitor; and hence it is, that we feel the utmost delight at beholding these great men come forth, as it were, into revived existence, and deliver their solemn admonitions, and their powerful appeals, enriched by the fragrance of their embalmed memories, and enforced by the authority of their time-consecrated names.

But we shall avail ourselves of this opportunity to protest against that mode of editing the works of old writers, which has too much prevailed of late, and which assumes to itself the privilege of *correcting the expressions* of the original author. Right feeling and sound taste are in direct opposition to this pernicious practice; and we hope to see it altogether discountenanced. Let us have them as they wrote, with all their raciness, and with all their coarseness; the vestiture may be rough and homespun, but the materials are rich, and the workmanship durable. If they must be altered, let us alter for ourselves, and then we shall at least be satisfied with the changes, which, to say the truth, we have very seldom seen, when the task has been performed by others. We do not inquire whether the expression be improved or not; it is enough for our disapprobation that we have not the language of the author. Hence arises the additional disadvantage, that these corrected publications can never become standard editions; for, since a man's thoughts and reasonings can never be fairly represented, excepting in his own phrases, whoever may be anxious to ascertain the real meaning of the writer, must look for it in other and earlier editions. Besides this, it is, as we have had occasion to determine by experiment, by no means an easy thing for two persons to agree in a proposed series of alterations, in a case where such alterations were mutually admitted to be necessary to the evolution of the sense. We can recollect but very few works, in which correction can really be considered as indispensable, and among these, the writings of Leighton afford perhaps the strongest instance. The original editions of that invaluable writer are nearly unin-

telligible, from the strange confusion of the text; we believe that they were chiefly posthumous, and we are sure that they were most negligently examined in their passage through the press. Some of the works of Sibbs, an inferior, but pious and interesting writer, are nearly in the same condition. The simplest and most satisfactory plan, in all common cases, would be to establish the text with as scrupulous an adherence to the original as possible, carefully correcting press errors, and paying most minute attention to the punctuation. If this last particular were properly attended to, it would of itself clear the text, and illustrate the meaning, to a scarcely credible degree. Among the printers of former times, there was much caprice and irregularity, and their pointing, especially, was the "worse confounding" of previous "confusion." A remarkable instance of this lies before us at the present moment, in an edition (1755) of Jenks's sound and seasonable essay on "submission to the righteousness of God;" it is very respectably printed in 12mo; but the arrangement of the stops is absurd and puzzling to a most vexatious degree, and the incessant introduction of capitals, prefixed even to the most trivial words, displeases the eye, and confuses the attention. All this should be carefully and judiciously remedied; but we again request of the superintendents of new editions of our invaluable old divinity, that they will scrupulously abstain from meddling with the text. The tenth edition of Chillingworth is an excellent specimen of simple, yet diligent and complete republication; it is an accurate reprint of the third, but the few various readings of the two former are noted in the lower margin. And we cannot here withhold the expression of our deep regret, that Mr. Pratt should have been induced to desist from his intention of proceeding in his task of collecting and arranging the writings of episcopal divines. His edition of Bishop Hall is a model of scrupulous revision; the works of Bishop Hopkins also are admirably edited; but, notwithstanding the reasons given in the "account," and the enumeration of altered passages, we should have been better pleased if Mr. Pratt had followed his first method, and left his "reader to be fully satisfied that he was in possession of his author unaltered." We wish writers of established reputation to be considered as ancient classics; to be approached with reverence, studied with diligence and care, and to be preserved and valued too carefully and too highly, to admit of mixture or of change.

It is, however, high time to quit this desultory strain of comment, and to introduce our readers to the interesting tract which has led us into a course of observation, we hope not altogether without its use, though not strictly limited to the subject in hand. Bishop Reynolds, we will confess, does not stand quite so high in our opinion as he seems to do in that of the editor. We admire his exalted piety, and his exemplary private character; we admit with Dr. Winter, whose sound judgment makes him a safe guide, that his theological views are "scripturally correct," his "spirit" "truly devotional," and his "language," on the whole, "chaste and energetic;" but when the editor put together "great abilities, extensive learning, solid judgment, and profound skill in divine things," though some of the expressions be apposite, yet we do not recognize, in the compound, the pious, amiable, and learned, but wavering, and, as we think, somewhat feeble-minded, Bishop of Norwich. Baxter seems to have formed some such notion of him by the terms in which he speaks of his conduct, when the "engagement" was tendered by the parliamentary visitors in 1648, to the holders of good things in the university of Oxford.

"Poor Dr. Edward Reynolds had the hardest measure; for when he refused to take the engagement, his place was forfeited; and afterwards they drew him to take it, in hopes to keep his place, (which was no less than the deanship of Christ's church,) and then turned him out of all."

Reliquia Baxteriana. By Silvester.

And on a subsequent occasion, after his acceptance of a bishopric, when he was appointed one of the court commissioners at the notorious Savoy conference, Baxter says of him, that

"Bishop Reynolds spake much the first day for bringing them to abatements and moderation: and afterwards he sat with them, and spake now and then a word for moderation. He was a solid honest man, but through mildness, and excess of timorous reverence to great men, altogether unfit to contend with them."—*Reliq. Baxter.*

Though we cannot think that Dr. Reynolds was, in any sense of the word, a "great" man, yet we consider him as an agreeable and useful writer, and as an evangelical and acceptable preacher; he was valued and respected by his contemporaries, and his reputation for piety and talent has been sanctioned by succeeding times. The present series of meditations is one of his earliest compositions, and we agree with the editor in thinking it "a valuable work;" and in recommending it as having "a

tendency to excite in us a godly jealousy over our own hearts;" and to "guard us against the wiles of satan, and the plausible reasonings, and no less fascinating examples of those who are advocates for a laxity in practice inconsistent with the self-denial which the gospel enjoins." We shall cite as an advantageous specimen, the 28th meditation.

"But what, Peter! though thou canst find thy Saviour without the hall, is there no comfort to be taken in his sensible presence? Doth the possession of faith make vain and fruitless the fruition of sight? Is it not some joy to see him, because it is so much blessedness to believe in him? Was there health in his garment, and is there no pleasure in his presence? Was the womb blessed that held him, and is there not some blessedness in the eyes that see, and the hands that embrace him? Was it from temptation, which had before foiled thee, that thou didst fly as a burnt child from the fire? Was the voice of a virgin able to drive thee from the son of a virgin; or the challenge of a servant, from the presence of a lord? Was not that look able to confirm thee, which was able to convert thee? Or couldest thou fear to fall from the rock, thy Saviour, because thou hadst before fallen from the sand of thy presumption; or was it out of a loathing of that place of blasphemy where thy Master and thy God did suffer the base reproaches of wicked men? Could the air of that place be infectious, where was so precious, so innocent, so saving a breath to sweeten it! Was the blasphemy of a Jew more pestilent to pollute, than the grace of thy Jesus to sanctify the high-priests hall? The presence of Christ could make that place a heaven to Peter, which the blasphemies of a Jew had made his hell. It was neither the villeness of the place, nor the question of a servant, which could have done thee any violence. They might tempt, they could not wound thee. A mountain stands unmoved though the winds be impetuous, when a smaller breath not only shakes, but breaks down a reed. If thy Lord have given thee strength, thy adversary cannot give thee a fall: if he beckon to thee to turn, thou art by his finger sufficiently armed against a torment, a devil, much more against a temptation, a maid. But such is the recovery of faith, as of health, it proceeds by degrees, from weakness unto strength, from fear unto confidence, and dares not trust in Christ without some trembling. Peter is assured of his Master's love, and yet he is ashamed of his own sin. Shame is ever sin's companion. He durst not to look that Master in the face, whom he had so lately denied: he could with the publican knock his breast, he could not look up to heaven, to the face of his Master; he could pray unto Christ, he could not accompany him. And as the modesty of nature makes a man able to deliver more of his mind in absence than in presence: so the shame of sin makes Peter more confident without, than within the hall." p. 64-67.

This little volume is uncommonly well put together; it contains a short but sensible preface by the editor; to which is appended Dr. Winter's judicious recommendation, the life of Dr. Reynolds, and the tract itself, with its original prefatory matter. The book is well printed, and altogether a very suitable pocket or closet companion. A neat portrait is prefixed.

Illustrations of the Holy Scriptures: in Three Parts.—1. From the Geography of the East.—2. From the Natural History of the East.—3. From the Custom of Ancient and Modern Nations. By the Rev. George Paxton, Professor of Theology, under the General Associate Synod, Edinburgh. In 2 vols. 8vo. pp. 1250. Price 1l. 6s. Edinburgh, 1819.

THE second part of this work is devoted to the natural history of the East—that is, its botany and zoology; for Mr. Paxton does not touch on its mineralogy at all. We think this a defect, as there are numerous allusions to stones and metals in scripture, as well as to plants and animals; and the sources of information to which the Professor has resorted on the other departments of his subject, would have furnished him, without much labour, with some valuable illustration of these. We must be satisfied, however, with what we have.

We pretend not to be simply versed in botanical lore; but we think Mr. Paxton, on the whole, very happy in his descriptions of plants, and in his application of classical poetry, to adorn and confirm his views. From the class of shrubs, we select his account of "The mustard tree."

"The account which our Lord gave of the mustard tree, recorded in the gospel of Matthew, has often excited the ridicule of unbelievers, or incurred their pointed condemnation: "The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field; which is indeed the least of all seeds, but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches of it." We behold no such mustard trees in this country, say the enemies of revelation, therefore the description of Christ must be erroneous. But the consequence will not follow, till it is proved that no such trees exist in any part of the world. This parable of the mustard tree was delivered in a public assembly, every individual of which was well acquainted with it; many of them were the avowed enemies of our Lord, and would have gladly seized the opportunity of exposing him to the scorn of the multi-

inde, if he had committed any mistake. The silent acquiescence of the scribes and Pharisees affords an irrefragable proof that his description is perfectly correct. They knew that the same account of that plant more than once occurs in the writings of their fathers.

"In the Babylonish Talmud, a Jewish Rabbi writes, that a certain man of Sicliem had bequeathed him by his father three boughs of mustard; one of which broken off from the root yielded nine kabs of seed, and the wood of it was sufficient to cover the potter's house. Another Rabbi, in the Jerusalem Talmud says, he had a stem of mustard in his garden, into which he could climb as into a fig tree. After making every reasonable allowance for the hyperbolical terms in which these Talmudical writers indulged, they certainly referred to real appearances in nature; and no man will pretend that it was any part of their design to justify the Saviour's description. But, the birds of the air might certainly lodge with ease among the branches of a tree that was sufficiently strong to sustain the weight of a man. The fact asserted by our Lord is stated in the clearest terms by a Spanish historian, who says, that in the province of Chili, in South America, the mustard grows to the size of a tree, and the birds lodge under its shade, and build their nests in its branches." Vol. i. p. 251, 252.

We should have been gratified had our author been able to produce an account of this plant from some modern travellers in India. We apprehend it cannot wholly have disappeared from that country, and that had sufficient attention been paid to it, some discovery would have been made in confirmation of the hyperbolical language of scripture. We observe that Bishop Pearce, in his commentary of Matthew xiii. 32. refers to "Sir Thomas Browne's Observations on Scripture Plants," for an illustration of the grain of mustard seed. We have not the means of consulting Browne's work at hand; and we are rather surprised to see no reference to it in Mr. Paxton's volumes.

In the account of the sycamore tree; we have some useful illustration of scripture; we can only, however, quote a part of the description.

"The Egyptians are not the only people to whose palate the fruit of the sycamore is agreeable; Hasselquist, the Swedish traveller, found it very grateful to the taste; he describes it as soft, watery, and sweetish, with something of an aromatic flavour. The fruit of this tree comes to maturity several times in a season, according to some writers not fewer than seven times; although prolific figs, or such as are perfectly formed, ripen only once. Thus, the sycamore produces a fresh crop of agreeable, and not unwholesome fruit, seven times a year, for the use of those that dwell under its shadow; a boon which perhaps no other tree in the

garden of nature bestows on man. Nor is it a dangerous or a laborious task to gather the figs; they seem to have so little hold of the parent tree, that, "if they be shaken, they shall even fall into the mouth of the eater." The disposition of the fig tree to part with her untimely or precocious figs, is noticed by John in the book of Revelation:—"And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs when she is shaken of a mighty wind." This accounts for the appointment of a particular officer in the reign of David, whose sole duty it was to watch over the plantations of sycamore and olive trees: "And over the olive trees and the sycamore trees that were in the low plains, was Baalhanan the Gederite." So valuable was the sycamore in the land of Canaan, during the reign of David, (from which undoubtedly may be inferred the high estimation in which it was held in every age,) that, in the commission of Baalhanan, the officer charged with its protection, it is joined with the olive, one of the most precious gifts which the God of Nature has bestowed on the oriental nations. Hasselquist found the sycamore growing in great numbers in the plains and fields of Lower Egypt, which verifies the accuracy of the inspired writer; and it appears from the same traveller, that the olive delights in similar situations; for, in his journey from Jaffa to Ramla, he passed through fine vales abounding with olive trees.

"The sycamore buds in the latter end of March, and the prolific fruit ripens in the beginning of June. Pliny and other natural historians allege, that it continues immature till it is rubbed with iron combs, after which it ripens in four days. Is it not an operation of this kind to which the prophet Amos refers in the text which we translate, "I was a gatherer of sycamore fruit?" The Septuagint seems to refer it to something done to the fruit to hasten its maturity; probably to the action of the iron comb, without the application of which, the figs cannot be eaten because of their intolerable bitterness. Parkhurst renders the phrase, a scraper of sycamore fruit; which he contends, from the united testimony of natural historians, is the true meaning of the original term. The business of Amos then, before his appointment to the prophetic office, was to scrape or wound the fruit of the sycamore tree, to hasten its maturity and prepare it for use. Simon renders it a cultivator of sycamore fruit, which is perhaps the preferable meaning; for it appears that the cultivation of this fig required a variety of operations, all of which, it is reasonable to suppose, were performed by the same persons. To render the tree fruitful, they scorified the bark, through which a kind of milky liquor continually distilled. This, it is said, causes a little bough to be formed without leaves, having upon it sometimes six or seven figs. They are hollow, without grains, and contain a little yellow matter, which is generally a nest of grubs. At their extremity, a sort of water collects, which, as it prevents them from ripening, must be let out. Amos, it is probable, was employed in these various operations; which has induced Simon

and others to render the words, not a gatherer of sycamore fruit, but a dresser of the sycamore tree; which includes all the culture and attendance it requires.

The sycamore is a large spreading tree, sometimes shooting up to a considerable height, and so thick, that three men can hardly grasp the trunk. This unfolds the reason why Zacheus climbed up into a sycamore tree, to get a sight of his Redeemer. The incident also furnishes a proof that the sycamore was still common in Palestine; for this tree stood to protect the traveller by the side of the highway." vol. i. p. 261-263.

Our author then passes on to the insects, and furnishes us with accounts of the "fly—the hornet—the ant—the spider—the bee—the moth—the locust—the scorpion—the horse leech, and the snail." The next takes up the serpent tribe, and treats of "the viper—the cockatrice or basilisk—the cerastes or horned snake, and the dragon." Then follows amphibious animals—such as the frog—the behemoth, which we think he successfully shows to be not the elephant, but the hippopotamus of the Nile. We wish, however, he had taken up the objections to this, contained in Scott's ingenious version of the book of Job, where the elephant is supposed to be intended. After Bochart, Mr. Paxton and all writers fix the Leviathan on the crocodile:—

"Dire reptile, on the dust without a peer,
Fill'd with a soul incapable of fear;
All boasts of lofty stature he disdains,
And fiercest o'er the fierce supreme he reigns."
SCOTT.

The domestic animals next pass in review—the camel—the horse—the ass—the mule—the ox—the sheep—the goat—the dog, and the hog—are severally described at considerable length. From the remarks on the hog, we select the following passage.

"Many reasons have been assigned by ancient and modern writers, for the strong antipathy of the Jewish people to this animal; but these it were useless to enumerate, as the ceremonial precept is clear and precise: 'And the swine, though he divide the hoof, and be cloven footed, yet he cheweth not the cud; he is unclean unto you;' and the transgression of this precept was even followed by the most pointed reproofs, and the severest threatenings. The prophet Isaiah charges his degenerate people with eating swine's flesh, and having the broth of abominable things in their vessels. They had not yet neglected to bring their sacrifices to the altar of Jehovah; but they no longer served their God in sincerity and truth: 'He that killeth an ox, is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an

idol. Yes, they have abased their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.' Conduct so contrary to their solemn engagements, so hateful in the sight of the Holy One, though long endured, was not always to pass with impunity: 'They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens, behind one tree in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the Lord.' Such a sacrifice was an abomination to the Lord, both because the eating of blood was prohibited, and because the sacrifice consisted of swine's flesh; and to aggravate the sin of the transgressor, such a sacrifice is compared to the killing of a human victim, or the immolation of a dog; both of which Jehovah regarded with abhorrence. To these precepts and threatenings, which were often supported by severe judgments, may be traced the habitual and unconquerable aversion of that people to the use of swine's flesh; an aversion which the most alluring promises, and the most cruel sufferings, have been found alike insufficient to subdue. Happy for them had they been equally attentive to the weightier matters of their law; happier still, had they understood the true nature and design of these institutions, and acquiesced in their abolition, and the introduction of a better dispensation of mercy, at the coming of the promised Messiah.

"He has long since appeared in our nature, and has broken down the venerable barriers which separated the chosen people from the gentile nations, and blessed his church with greater light and freedom. Those precepts which he issued in the wilderness, concerning clean and unclean beasts, are now abrogated; for it is written: 'Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.' 'What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.' The words of Paul are not less clear and precise than those of his Lord: 'I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself,—for the kingdom of God is not in meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.' To the Corinthians he writes, 'Meat commendeth us not to God: for neither if we eat, are we the better; neither if we eat not, are we the worse.' 'Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no questions for conscience sake: For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.' He teaches the same doctrine in his epistle to the Colossians: 'Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy-day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath-days: which are a shadow of good things to come; but the body is of Christ.—Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (touch not, taste not, handle not; which all are to perish in the using,) after the commandments and doctrines of men? 'Every creature of God is good,' says the same apostle to Timothy, 'and nothing is to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving;' and to Titus, 'To the pure,

all things are pure.' From these passages, it must be evident to every reflecting and unprejudiced mind, that the apostolic prohibition concerning things strangled, and blood, must have been intended to continue only in force for a time, in condescension to the conscientious scruples of the Jewish converts, who were, at the time that decree was made, all zealous of the law. For if nothing is to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving; if we may eat whatever is exposed for sale; if meat neither makes a Christian better nor worse,—then things strangled and blood, may also be used, if some special reason do not render it necessary or expedient to refrain." vol. i. p. 407—409.

We do not consider that we have any peculiar prejudices against eating blood, and we have reflected more than once on the apostolic decree; and yet we are not quite prepared for the summary conclusion to which Mr. Paxton comes—that it was "only in force for a time, in condescension to the conscientious scruples of the Jewish converts." We would recommend to Mr. Paxton the full and impartial consideration of De Laury, on the grant of animal food made to Noah, and on the apostolic decree; and the dissertations of Pirrie and Glass, on blood eating. We cannot enter on the subject here, but we should be glad to receive a good paper or two for the essay department of our work, on the apostolic decree.

The work proceeds to wild beasts, including the offensive and inoffensive animals; and, finally, in this part, the birds of prey, and the harmless birds of scripture. We find we have no room for quotation, and little opportunity for remark. There are few faults to notice, and we choose not to dwell upon any. We can only, therefore, repeat our general tribute of approbation to the accuracy and research of the work, and our conviction, that those who wish to cultivate this department of scriptural literature, will derive important benefit from it.

The last part of the work, "On the Customs and Manners of Ancient and Modern Nations," which occupies nearly the whole of the second volume, we think less necessary, and less likely to be read than the former, as so many books on this subject already exist. The *Oriental Customs of Barder*, and the *Observations of Harmer*, supply almost every thing that could be desired on this subject. At the same time, we must do Mr. Paxton the justice to say, that this work discovers much accurate thinking, and that he is far from being a servile copier of his predecessors. He brings his researches to bear on many passages which had been overlooked. We conclude, by quoting the

solemn passage in which the Professor finishes his labours. It is part of the illustration drawn from the triumphal honours of the Greeks and Romans.

"The officers and soldiers, also, were rewarded according to their merit. Among the Romans, the noblest reward which a soldier could receive, was the civic crown, given to him who had saved the life of a citizen, made of oak leaves, and, by order of the general, presented by the person who had been saved, to his preserver, whom he ever after respected as a parent. Alluding to this high distinction, the apostle says to his son Timothy; 'I have fought a good fight—henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge will give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.' And lest any one should imagine, that the christian's crown is perishable in its nature, and soon fades away, like a crown of oak leaves, the apostle Peter assures the faithful soldier of Christ, that his crown is infinitely more valuable and lasting: 'Ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.' And this account is confirmed by James; 'Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that fear him.'

"The military crowns were conferred by the general in presence of the army; and such as received them, after a public eulogium on their valour, were placed next his person. The christian also receives his unmerited reward from the hand of the captain of his salvation: 'Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.' And like the brave veteran of ancient times, he is promoted to a place near his Lord: 'To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne.' The saints must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, who will produce the proofs of their fidelity before assembled worlds, to justify the sentence he is about to pronounce. Holy angels will applaud the justice of the proceeding, and condemned spirits, and reprobate men, will have nothing to object; then, while he pronounces a sentence which at once eulogizes their conduct, and announces their honourable acquittal, 'Well done good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord;' he will set upon their heads a crown of purest gold, put a palm of victory into their right hand, clothe them in robes of celestial brightness, and place them around his throne: 'And so shall they be for ever with the Lord.'" vol. ii. p. 615, 616.

Observations on the Philosophy of Criminal Jurisprudence; being an Investigation of the Principles necessary to be kept in View during the Revision of the Penal Code; with Remarks on Peniten-

tiary Prisons. By J. E. Bicheno, of the Middle Temple, Esq. F.L.S. London, 1819. 8vo. 8s. Hunter.

THE revision of the penal code was an object, to the accomplishment of which the late Sir Samuel Romilly directed the energies of his enlightened and gigantic mind. Equally distinguished by his erudition as a lawyer, his liberal and comprehensive views as a statesman, and the generous warmth of his benevolence as a philanthropist, he had obtained an ascendancy over the public mind, honourable alike to his own character, and to that of the people of England. The confidence of the empire was reposed in him; while the might and majesty of his genius empowered him, on the one hand, to vanquish the scruples of the adversaries of innovation, who had been long accustomed to resist every proposed change, as if it were pregnant with destruction, the sobriety of his judgment presented, on the other, a barrier against the precipitate measures of those daring empirics in legislation, whose impetuous passions impel them to conclusions which their awakened reason subsequently condemns. The days, however, allotted by Providence to this extraordinary man were much too short for the extent and grandeur of his projects; the purposes of his humane and patriotic breast were cut off in an hour of unexpected darkness, and Romilly is numbered with "the mighty dead."

Happily for this country, its interests and its policy are not suspended entirely on the life of any one man. We have seen another individual step forward to occupy the place of Romilly on this great subject, with at least equal qualifications for the task; and, judging from the progress already made, with even fairer prospects of ultimate success. All measures so comprehensive as to assume a national character, and so important as to involve the permanent prosperity or injury of the commonwealth, are sanctioned and dictated by the voice of the public. We will venture to assert, in opposition to those who, confounding the sentiments of a minority with those of the people at large, deny this fact, that the public voice in this country, whether wisely or unwisely expressed, is irresistible; that it influences and controls all the leading measures of government; and that, without the sanction of that voice, the projects of the ministry, and the designs of the mob, are equally powerless. Unsupported by public opinion, the most able and intrepid man in the empire stands a mere cipher, whatever importance he may attach to his own views of

policy, or whatever elevation of rank may belong to him in the state. And where public opinion is once decided on the importance of any great measure, that measure will not fail, sooner or later, to be carried; although, perhaps, the man who has done most to enlighten the public mind on the subject is removed from the sphere of his exertions, before the object of his labours has been fully realized. The death of Sir Samuel Romilly may have retarded for awhile the revision of our criminal law; but we feel assured, that if public opinion requires it, (and we see no reason to doubt that this will be the case,) the measure will be ultimately carried. Perhaps the delay which has occurred is matter rather of congratulation than of regret. Deeply as we lament the catastrophe which took from the bar one of its most accomplished pleaders, from the senate one of its most efficient members, and from the country at large one who was an ornament to society, by his talents, his virtues, his eloquence, and his patriotism, we will not hesitate to avow our opinion, that what this cause has lost in the removal of this great and zealous advocate, may be more than compensated by the more lengthened investigation it will receive, and by the more deep and universal hold it will take upon the public mind. No measure of such magnitude can be permanent, but by the concurrent assent of all orders of men in the state; and the temporary delay is not for a moment to be balanced against its final security. In the meantime, it behoves the public and the members of the legislature to deliberate calmly upon the several bearings of this question, giving a patient hearing to all parties—to the philosophic speculator, and to the collector of facts.

Mr. Bicheno appears in the former of these characters, and the calm and unimpassioned tone with which he pursues his argument, together with the profound knowledge of human nature which he discovers, fully entitle him to that appellation taken in its most just and dignified sense. If his work abounds too much with tautologies, and, besides the want of compression, bears other marks of rapid composition, he has disarmed criticism of its severity, by the ingenuousness of his own acknowledgments: "No man can be more sensible of these defects than the writer of this volume; and it only remains for him to regret, that the urgency of the question forbade him to adopt the maxim, '*Namque prematur in annum*;' and to supplicate the indulgence of the reader for those errors which are attributable to hasty composition."

We cannot convey to our readers a more correct view of the nature of this discussion, than by quoting the author's own epitome given in his preface.

"The outline of my argument is briefly this. We must endeavour to discover the general laws by which the affairs of mankind are naturally regulated without any interference on the part of human legislatures; and must make ourselves acquainted with the orderly succession of events, to which all things, both in the physical and moral world, have a tendency, and the means which nature has adopted to rectify the discrepancies which are incidental to this constitution of things. Having established this first point, I endeavour to point out where we must discover those general laws which are connected with Criminal Jurisprudence. The instinctive dispositions and inalienable rights of our nature, which are intended to protect us from aggression, afford us the clue; and, in taking these as our guide, I contend that we fall in with the practical tendency of law as well as with the abstract reason of it; and that we are not lost in the remote and vague speculation to which those who treat the law as purely conventional are obliged to resort. The end proposed by penal jurisprudence I have stated, as others have done, to be the prevention of crimes; but a broad distinction is drawn between crimes when treated abstractedly, or as offences against the Deity, and crimes treated as injuries done to the members of society. It is in the latter view alone that the municipal law has to do with them. I then proceed to examine the qualities and properties of offences by which we are best enabled to proportion punishment or penalties to them; and this most intricate part of our discussion brings us to this conclusion, which I can regard only as an approximation to truth, that the least exceptionable criterion is the moral character of the action to be punished. Nevertheless, by adopting this as our guide, care must be taken, that punishment be not dealt out retributively, or with relation to injury and crime in the abstract; and that the intimidation of the wicked be not the primary object. What is added by way of example must be employed incidentally, and not to increase the measure of corporeal suffering. The example must arise out of the manner of executing the sentence; and not, as is too frequently the case, out of the subject-matter. Having determined that the first object of the law is to restrain the criminal, and then to reform him, and deter others, I proceed to examine the modes of punishment best adapted to answer these desirable ends, and am led to give the preference to imprisonment, with its various modifications, for all offences short of the most flagrant. The infliction of death, I determine, can be justified only on account of those aggravated crimes which dis sever the elements of a healthful society; and is to be regarded, not altogether as a punishment, but as the only means of defence against a certain description of miscreants."—*Preface*, p. v.—viii.

From this outline of Mr. Bicheno's

argument, which, in the body of the work, he has filled up with much ability, it will be instantly perceived, (and the author himself was perfectly conscious of the fact,) that it was more easy to detect error than to pronounce truth; and that the difficulties of the subject may be seen, while the solution of these difficulties is yet to be sought for. It is sufficiently plausible to say, with the Philosopher of Cairo, that in the enactment and administration of penal laws, the great object to be kept in view, is "to co-operate with the present system of things;" but by what grasp of intellect, by what depth of science, is the complete knowledge of that system to be attained? So, likewise, criminal law ought to be founded, it is true, on the animal passions and moral nature of man; but of that nature, who has penetrated all the abysses? And when we have acquired what, *by comparison*, may be deemed a profound knowledge of man in his individual and social capacity, are we not still floating upon the surface of a mighty deep? The result of our author's labours is, after all, confessedly, nothing more than "an approximation to truth." Indeed, it appears to us, that the practical difficulty of this question rests precisely where it was; that it attaches with equal pertinacity to every theory of penal jurisprudence—the difficulty of so proportioning punishment to crime as, on the one hand, not to encroach upon the prerogative of Deity, the sole administrator of retributive justice in the moral system of the universe; and, on the other, not to leave society without sufficient safeguards against the aggressions of the wicked. If crimes are to be visited with punishment proportioned to their moral quality, that is, to the extent of their moral delinquency, which is the ground Mr. Bicheno takes, they must be regarded either as offences against God, or against society. As offences against God, they do not come under the cognizance of human tribunals, nor is it possible that they should, for this obvious reason among others, that no finite intelligence can measure the precise *quantum* of guilt which any given crime involves, as a violation of the law, and an insult on the majesty of heaven. If, therefore, punishment is to be proportioned to the moral quality of the act of delinquency at all, it must have respect to the offence, as an aggression upon the peace and order of society. But is it not obvious that we are here encircled by the same insurmountable difficulties; and that it is quite as impossible to say what, precisely, is the amount of guilt contracted by a crime against man, as it is

to decide on all the moral bearings of an offence committed against God? In short, it appears to us that this point does not admit of lengthened discussion; and when we have admitted, without reserve, that Mr. Bicheno is ingenious and eloquent, while he pursues it, we must still pronounce his argument to be altogether inefficient. Moral retribution not being the end of penal law, moral qualities cannot be the criterion by which punishment is to be proportioned. The first object to be looked to, is security for society; the second, the reformation of the culprit; and these ends are to be attained, with as close a regard as possible to the great principles of humanity and mercy. Inadequate punishment is injustice to the public; exorbitant punishment is cruelty to the offender. With these few remarks, we leave the speculative portion of the work before us to the perusal of those of our readers who interest themselves in the philosophy of the subject; it will suggest topics of thought, when it does not unravel perplexities.

But whatever may be the fate which awaits the speculations of the philosopher, nothing can be more clear than that the penal code of this country, as it now stands, is sanguinary and merciless, to an extent by no means required by the safety of society. It proceeds, not so much on the principle of security, as on that of revenge; and is more characteristic of a barbarous age, in which passion rules, and reason sleeps, than of an era like the present, in which civilization, and morals, and religion, are, in a progressive measure, shedding their mild and holy influences over the minds and manners of men. If the number of crimes which, by the penal laws of this country, are made punishable by death, were, indeed, rendered, of necessity, capital, from an imperious regard to the public prosperity, and to the safety, the property, and the lives of individuals; if nothing short of the privation of existence would appal the criminal, and circumscribe his powers of mischief, then must the executioner still proceed with his work of death. Necessity supersedes every other law; nor is the public welfare to be sacrificed to any dubious speculations of a moral or philosophic kind. But no such necessity can be pleaded. On the contrary, those crimes which are denounced most emphatically by the vengeance of the law, have multiplied so rapidly, that the inefficacy of the gallows is shown to a moral demonstration, while humanity itself is shocked at the useless effusion of human blood, and our judges and our juries are compelled, by a regard to the voice of na-

ture speaking from within, and by a proper respect to the undisguised sentiments of the public, to nullify the severe provisions of the law. How often are our judges (an order of men, than whom a more illustrious never dispensed justice upon earth) reduced to the solemn mockery of pronouncing death, when they know that the sentence is not intended to be put in execution! To annihilate an evil so monstrous must be an object worthy of the interposition of the legislature. It is due to the feelings, the dignity, the uncompromised consistency of those who preside in our courts of justice. It is due to the majesty of the law. A masterly article in the *Eclectic Review* of January last, contains the following anecdote, which we will take the liberty to transcribe into our pages, as giving a happy and forcible illustration of the subject before us. "Upon the Home Circuit, some years ago, a young woman was tried, for having stolen to the amount of forty shillings in a dwelling-house. It was her first offence, and was attended by many circumstances of extenuation. The prosecutor appeared, as he stated, from a sense of duty; the witnesses very reluctantly gave their evidence, and the jury still more reluctantly their verdict of guilty. It was impossible not to observe the interest excited in the court. The judge passed sentence of death. She instantly fell lifeless at the bar. Lord Kenyon, whose sensibilities were not impaired by the sad duties of his office, cried out, in great agitation, from the bench, 'I don't mean to hang you! Will nobody tell her I don't mean to hang her?' This fact was referred to in the House of Commons, by an honourable member, who had himself been an eye-witness of the scene. 'I then felt,' said he, 'as I now feel, that this was *passing sentence, not upon the prisoner, but upon the law*. I ask whether an English judge ought to be placed in a situation, where it is imperative upon him to pass sentence of death, when he has not the remotest intention to order the sentence to be carried into execution?"

The matter, at present, stands thus:—if the law is strictly and impartially administered, humanity is outraged by its severity; if it is not executed, but its inexorable and stern character appears modified by the caprice or the wisdom of its administrators, it is then dishonoured; nor can it command that veneration which ought to give it weight and solemnity in the minds of the people. So far, however, is it from taking its regular course, that in the vast majority of criminal cases, the prerogative of mercy, which ought to be reserved for

special occasions, is exercised, if the law is equitable, with a lavish prodigality, and the sentence of judgment is mitigated in favour of the offender. The exception is become the rule, and the rule is made the exception. In fact, the law is condemned.

On these grounds chiefly rests the expediency of a calm and wholesome revision of our criminal code. The advocates of this measure have generally proceeded a step further, and have pleaded, that the severity of the law, by inducing judges and juries to shelter the criminal from its extreme grasp, has produced an uncertainty in the distribution of justice, which operates as an incentive to transgression, since each violator of the law indulges the hope that he shall be one of the many who escape condign punishment. With whatever positivism this has been advanced, it appears to us, at least questionable; nor can it fail, if it be a groundless assumption, to injure the cause which it is designed to advance, since, if any one leading argument is overthrown by our opponents, they will be emboldened to condemn, as equally fallacious, others that have a deeper foundation in truth. If the increase of crimes has been of late years rapid; if the timid and the melancholy see nothing in prospect but the destruction of morals, the unrestrained ravages of fraud, and rapine, and murder, life at the mercy of the assassin, and the fabric of social order shaken by an unnatural convulsion of the moral elements—still let it be remembered, that there are sufficient causes to be assigned, without adverting to the one in question. The rapid increase of our population, and especially in the manufacturing districts, which are ever fertile in idleness, profanity, profligacy, and crime; boundless luxury and desperate speculation—the fruits of our commercial enterprise; habits of debauchery, introduced by the contact of the people with military and naval adventurers, through a war of five and twenty years; the immense magnitude of the metropolis, in whose dens of iniquity the monsters of crime find ready concealment, and the extravagance and splendour of whose population has infected the remotest corners of the empire with the love of dissipating pleasures; and last, but not least, the neglected education of the lower classes, who, but for the despised labours of sectarian teachers, would have been still more miserably destitute of knowledge and religion, “in double darkness wrapt;”—these, surely, present a combination of causes of power sufficient to work all the evil under which society trembles, and at the sight of

which the christian weeps. While the multiplication of crimes can be thus satisfactorily explained, without reference to the supposed demoralizing effects of a severe penal code, it is not so obvious how the severity of the law can have aided in producing, at least to the extent affirmed, the mighty mischief. The great mass of criminals may be divided into two classes: the desperate, whose business is plunder; and the inexperienced and timid, who involve themselves in guilt, under the pressure of occasional distress or temptation. The former are too reckless to calculate upon consequences, or too brutalized to dread them. They hold life too cheap, to be deterred by the fear of death from the gratification of their destructive propensities. They would not, in all probability, commit a single crime less, if the law, instead of being uncertain, were invariably carried into execution, upon the conviction of the prisoner.—The other class of persons, the inexperienced, are seduced into the perpetration of crime, not by the hope of mitigated punishment, but by the expectation of secrecy and escape. They sin not upon balancing the probabilities of partial or of condign punishment, but under the assurance of shunning detection altogether. If they were so far satisfied of the probability of exposure, as deliberately to sit down and weigh the chances of the gallows and of Botany Bay, they would, we think, abstain altogether from the crime. The severity of the law, therefore, is not chargeable with their offences. That severity, perhaps, has doomed many to the fatal tree, for whom exile or imprisonment would have been a more equitable sentence; but that it has stimulated to a single crime, which would not otherwise have been committed, is not so easily proved. Nor, after all, has the multiplication of crimes been of so portentous a magnitude as many have supposed, or as the peculiar state of the times might have led men to anticipate. Excepting the single crime of forgery, the temptations to which have been of a kind to hold out the strongest lure to the profligate and the needy, there is no species of offence which is not, by a *just comparison* of present and former times, more infrequent than ever. Nor can we refrain, on the present occasion, from expressing our gratitude and our surprise, that, after a war of unexampled ferocity, and the termination of which has filled the country with disbanded soldiers and seamen, the more atrocious offences are not more common. It does honour to the character of our army and our navy; it justifies the high reputation for humanity which

they sustained, during the provocations of a sanguinary contest; and it contains an eulogium upon their principles and their discipline to which no eloquence is equal, that their return into the bosom of society, at a season when the commercial distresses of the nation precluded the possibility of their finding universal employment, has been felt in no other way, than by an increased pressure upon our means of relief for the destitute. They have not covered our roads with banditti, nor tenanted our goals with felons.

Closely connected with the revision of our criminal law is the subject of prison discipline, a subject for the elucidation of which the public is already so much indebted to the philanthropic labours of Buxton, Gurney, and Fry. With these distinguished individuals, Mr. Bicheno has much in common.—There is a passage in this department of his work of peculiar importance, and which we shall transcribe for the use of our readers.

"Laws which have for their object moral effects, must be executed by moral men. It is quite in vain to expect that the administrators of it, from the judge down to the gaoler, will ever produce any good by means of the law as a mere instrument of art. It may recognise the principles on which men are to conduct themselves towards criminals, but it can never enter into the particular methods of reformation. These must be left to the prudence and the moral capacity of those who have the care of them; and if visitors and chaplains have not had infused into them beforehand a large philanthropy, a great knowledge of human nature, a mild and conciliatory temper, and with a high sense of duty, the law will never fit them for their places, or supply their deficiencies. The great mistake has been that an exclusive dependance has been placed on the official persons appointed to superintend the prisons. The magistrates themselves, it is to be suspected, for want of thoroughly studying the question, have depended too much upon the efficacy of the law, instead of looking for a beneficial result from their own unremitting care, and that of others, who, instigated by benevolent motives, will devote their leisure to the same arduous and never-ending task. If ever any good be done to prisoners, it will be performed by those who set a high value upon moral instruction, and who are deeply interested in the welfare of their fellow-creatures; whose zeal in such a cause might be esteemed by the phlegmatic to be enthusiasm, and whose unremitting attention will do as much by example as by precept. Such persons have been found to undertake the instruction of the females of Newgate and of the Bristol Gaol; and it is impossible to do them too much honour as the forerunners, we would hope, of a system that shall prevail in every part of the empire. Protestants might here take a very useful lesson from the Catholics, whose religion has always provided a

description of persons, both from among the clergy and the laity, whose chief object is to attend to the miserable beings in hospitals and prisons; and not content with supplying only necessities for the body, administer comfort and instruction to their minds. Such are the *Sœurs de la Charité*, the institution of the *Misericordia*, and the different orders of mendicant friars. But as we cannot employ these assistants, we must endeavour to raise up another description independent of any peculiar religious opinions; and really the tenets are so utterly insignificant, so that they who hold them be but good and prudent, that we should endeavour to press into the service men of all denominations, and should not try them by the orthodoxy of their faith, so much as by their zeal in the cause of prison-reformation. We must raise up more Howards, and Frys, and Buxtons, who will brave both the physical and moral maladies of our goals. Then we may hope to see the prison-laws executed in their spirit, and the prisoners made the better for the wholesome discipline to which they will be subject. The heinous offender, instead of being rendered more desperate, will be reformed; the less offender will be restored to his friends and to society, a penitent and an useful member." p. 238–241.

Let magistrates in particular apply these observations to the election of persons to the office of gaoler. It is not enough to find a man of bold and commanding character, he must have humanity as well as fortitude, tenderness with decision.

Another consideration is suggested by this paragraph, which, without a very wide digression from the subject, may be introduced before this article is concluded. If too much stress cannot be laid on the application of moral and religious discipline to the inmates of our prisons, that they may be reclaimed to virtue before they are again sent forth into the bosom of society, it is obvious, that the employment of such discipline, upon a comprehensive scale among the people at large, will operate as the most effectual *preventive* of the evil which it is here designed to remedy. We have already intimated our persuasion, that little is to be expected from the revision of the law towards the *suppression of crime*;—for, if the severity of its provisions has not created the evil, the mitigation of that severity will not serve to diminish it. For the attainment of this momentous object, we must look to another quarter, to the spread of truth and righteousness among every order and rank of men throughout our demoralized country.

If that happy era ever arrives, when crimes shall be as rare as now they are frequent, it will be, when the principles of equity, upon which all just laws are founded, are interwoven into

the minds and habits of men; when obedience is rendered to authority, not so much from the dread of punishment, as from the love of rectitude; when the fear of man is subordinate to the sublimer sentiment of the fear of God; when, in a word, the law is enthroned in the hearts of the people. Of this close connexion between religion and social order, the fear of God, and loyalty to the law, no men are more sensible than the anarchists of the present day, who, by the fiend-like zeal with which they are propagating infidelity, pouring the very dregs of that accursed poison into the bleeding wounds of their country, have betrayed the secret, that their dependence for success lies in the abolition of christianity—in the desecration of the altar as preparatory to the subversion of the throne. They have sagacity enough to perceive that the constitution of these realms is invulnerable, while the majesty of revelation commands the homage of the people—while that book is consulted as the oracle of heaven, in which it is written;

—“*Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; customs to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.—Fear God; honour the King.*” Happily for us, the fomenters of popular delusion—who are plotting the ruin of their country, by extinguishing the piety of her people, and celebrating the apotheosis of an atheist, while, with the same breath, they blaspheme the Redeemer of the world—happily for us they are not the only men who are now aware of this fact. The conviction long resisted, and admitted at length with reluctance, that provision must be made for the moral instruction of our vast population, is now established in the public mind. Recent events have taught even those, who once, with the pride of aristocracy, and all the baseness of plebeian selfishness, advocated the cause of ignorance, that their safety lies in the quarter from which they dreamed only of danger. With such a sentiment, universally admitted, and constantly held up to public attention, we anticipate no permanent mischief from the portentous efforts of impiety, by which the minds of men are at this crisis appalled. If the spirit of restlessness which is abroad in the land, is any thing more than the common ebullition of momentary phrenzy—the excitement of overflowing and redundant health in a free people—the play of the lightning, and the roll of the thunder, by which the stillness of nature is occasionally broken, only that the elements may be kept pure—if it is more than this, and, as many believe, we are arrived “at a great crisis”—

still we have time to look the danger fully in the face, and may break the cloud before it falls. Let the members of the legislature unite with the wise and the virtuous of every name, in promoting the interests of religion among the lower classes. Let every such effort be made in the true spirit of conciliation, the higher orders of society conducting themselves towards the lower, with such kindness as is due even to the humblest portion of a free and christian people. Let them do this, and all is safe:—faction will expire—impiety will hide its head—anarchy and atheism will inhabit, in gloomy solitude, “*The temple of reason;*” for no votaries will be there, and no man need tremble for the future destitutions of the country.

It was our design to have transcribed from Mr. Bicheno's Appendix, a letter written in 1783, by Dr. Ford, Ordinary of Newgate, on the subject of capital punishments. It is exceedingly interesting and characteristic, and we refer our readers to another department of our work in which they will find it.

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*On Religion, and the Means of its Attainment.* By J. Brown, Minister of the Associate Congregation. Biggar. pp. 112. 18mo. Second Edition.

THE present is a day of much religious profession. The general obligations of christianity are pretty diffusely avowed, and so far as its name and external rites are concerned, our religion has drawn round it a goodly number of adherents. There is no paucity of self-called christians, or of those who will readily, and even warmly, vindicate the honours of that religion by which they are named, who will frequent our worshipping assemblies, who will read their Bibles, and affect the company and conversation of religious people. But among the multitudes professing religion, there is a great diversity of religious character. From the man of the world, who yet thinks it right to retain the name of a christian, to the enlightened and devout follower of Christ, there are numerous and wide distinctions. It would, however, be a relief and a refreshment to the eye, on looking over the many various groups of deficient characters, if it could rest, at last, on that section of professing christians, who are the voluntarily declared members of Christ's visible church, as on those who are, all and singly, just what they ought to be in their knowledge of his doctrines, in the affections of their hearts, and in the conduct of their lives. But even here we have frequent cause of regret. Many

sad instances, especially of defective knowledge, are every day found in individuals, whose characters for eminent religion are, nevertheless, current in their own circles. A profession of piety and of religious knowledge is often, alas! too hastily taken up. Some, from native indolence, have remained satisfied with their merely educational views of religion; some have drawn their instruction from erroneous and deficient sources; and others, from weakness, or prejudice, or both, continue, much to their own detriment, under any circumstances, very ignorant of some important principles of their religion. For ourselves, we have always been disposed to think, that much of this glaring defect in the case of adult christians of the present day, is to be traced to the relaxation in some, and the total abandonment in others, of the good old practice of *catechetical* instruction. The fathers and tutors of former generations laboured in this laudable exercise. They considered an early habit of accurate thinking on matters of religion an object of prime importance, and took, what we think, a wise method of securing it. They were accustomed, particularly in that part of the united kingdoms with which the author of the treatise before us is immediately connected, to train their children in the knowledge of religion, by frequently catechising them, reading with them the holy scriptures, and the standard works of their greater divines, and conversing with them on their contents. The general results were well known to be of the happiest kind.—Good sense, good morals, and piety, characterised the race that was thus diligently and faithfully trained.\* This excellent practice has suffered, from whatever cause, a considerable relaxation, not in families only, but in schools also,

\* If any one allege against this ancient discipline in the families and schools of Scotland, that it was mixed up with much bigotry and exclusive attachment to national peculiarities, unfavourable to a justly enlightened and liberal state of mind, we would only remind him, that, till this discipline began to operate, the Scottish character exhibited a picture of barbarism and depravity, truly humiliating; that, under the blessing of God, it contributed to raise that character to a height of moral excellence, which has ever since been the admiration of every well-informed observer of human society; and that since this discipline has been less strictly observed, the high tone of the Scottish character has suffered a proportional depression.

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and one of the many evil consequences it is to be feared, is the very defective attainments of many professors of religion in the present day.

This condition of things, so much to be lamented, appears to have suggested the necessity of a work like that under our review. The author has looked on the religious world with a discriminating eye, and a feeling heart. He saw the evil, and he has made an attempt to correct it. He tells us in his preface, that, "in his professional intercourse with mankind, he has frequently, with extreme mortification, observed, among that class who pass with others, and often with themselves, as well-informed in religion, a great deficiency and indistinctness in their views of the very elementary principles of christian truth. While they could talk plausibly on almost every point of a systematic theology, in a phraseology familiar to their ear, from their childhood, if called to say, in plain language, what religion is, and how men are to become religious, they but too clearly proved, that 'when for the time they ought to have been teachers, they had need of some one to teach them the first principles of the oracles of God;'—and that whatever they thought of themselves, they were indeed such as had 'need of milk, and not of strong meat.'"

To offer to that class of people a luminous view of the nature, means, and importance of religion, is the object of his treatise. He takes his theme from Proverbs iv. 7. After an appropriate introduction, in which he enforces the claim which the statement and injunction of Solomon have on our most serious consideration, he prosecutes his work in three divisions. Part first, contains two sections,—1. The nature of religion explained.—2. The identity of religion with wisdom. Part second has two sections,—1. Preliminary observations.—2. Faith the grand means of religion.—Part third has three sections,—1. The suitableness of religion to man.—2. The magnitude and variety of the means employed by God to make men religious.—3. The connexion of religion with happiness.

The narrow limits to which he confines himself, obliges him to much compression on these various topics. But though brief, we have not found him obscure. We perceive, too, from his general manner, that, had he thought it advisable, he could easily, and without failing to interest his readers, have greatly extended his remarks.

The following extract will help to convey some idea of the matter and the style of this little volume.

"Man, in the present state, is exposed  
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to evils numerous and severe. Some of these are felt, and others are the objects of fearful anticipation. To obtain relief from the first class, and security from the second, is an important point of wisdom. Man's actual evils are all reducible to two great heads, as they affect his body and his soul. Religion leads to the most efficient remedies for both.

"The mode of conduct which religion naturally produces, is better fitted than any other in ordinary circumstances to secure health and competence, and a good reputation: and, under the pressure of sickness, disease, poverty, and reproach, nothing but the principles it teaches, and the hopes it inspires, can communicate any thing like rational consolation. There is no cordial in the day of distress, at all comparable to that firm reliance on the wisdom, and power, and goodness of our reconciled God and heavenly Father; that unshaken assurance that all is ordered, and that all is well-ordered; that well-grounded persuasion that all things are working together for our good; that delightful consciousness of the sympathy of the exalted Redeemer; that unspeakable and glorious hope of eternal life, which religion, and religion alone, can produce. All 'the wisdom of this world,' in devising schemes for the alleviation of present distress, is foolishness when compared with this." p. 34, 35.

The following cautionary remarks on the actual state of man, considered as a religious being, we think are very sound and very sensible.

"It is very common, among a certain class of preachers and theological writers, to speak of religion as natural to man, and to represent him as naturally a religious being: and if, by these phrases, nothing more was meant than that all men are related, in a variety of ways, to the Supreme Being—that out of these relations, arise a corresponding set of obligations and duties—and that, in comparatively very rare instances, is man to be found altogether ignorant of these relations, or insensible of these objections; it would be unreasonable and foolish to find fault with these expressions, or with those who use them; but if they are intended, as we believe they often are, to convey the idea that the seeds of right religious knowledge and belief, affection and conduct, lie hid in the bosom of every man, or of any man in his natural state, and need only proper culture for their germination and complete development in devotional habits, and virtuous actions, we must assert that they contain a most pernicious error, and are altogether inconsistent with the obvious declarations of scripture, and with the experience and observation of every man of considerate thought." p. 46, 47.

His second section, part second, on *faith as the grand means of religion*, will be found, we doubt not, both interesting and instructive. But we feel that we

should not do it justice by exhibiting a short extract, and our limits forbid a long one. We cannot but wish, that he had, at greater length, and with greater earnestness, enforced the necessity of cherishing in the heart, and expressing in constant and fervent prayer, those sincere desires after the gift of faith to which it is never denied. Here we think the author has been too reserved. The frequent and urgent expression of our desires before God for whatever gift he has promised to bestow, is an exercise so powerfully and so repeatedly recommended in his own word, that it ought to be a prominent topic in every serious discussion of means for attaining religion. All that Mr. Brown has said on this religious exercise is included in about eight or nine lines.

"Prayer is not only calculated to promote faith directly, by bringing and keeping before the mind, in circumstances peculiarly solemn, the great truths of religion; but is also the appointed means of securing the continued operation of that divine influence, which is necessary to make men believers, and keep men believers. God gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask him." p. 98, 99.

These few words, judicious as far as they go, might, in our opinion, have suggested to Mr. Brown the propriety of going much farther into the subject, and of pressing it upon his readers as an exercise of indispensable duty. Doubtless, faith is the new principle in the heart, by which a religious man is to be regulated; but, whence comes faith? We feel, that in exhibiting faith as the means of attaining religion, we are not a step nearer the attainment. How is faith to be attained? The heart of man is alienated from God, and before he can desire to use the means of attaining religion, he must be the religious man which Mr. Brown's theory proposes to make him. In short, there is a question which lies much deeper than any here answered, and a question by far the most essential to have been answered, how is an unbelieving heart to be brought to give a cordial, grateful, and practical assent to the truths of the gospel? Should he be induced to put out a third edition of his work, we shall be very happy to see our complaints obviated by such an enlargement as, we are confident, he can make with good effect.

As to verbal criticism, we have little to make. His English readers will, however, perceive an occasional lapse into a national aptitude of expression, which, we are convinced, it would be easy for him to avoid.

# LITERARY INFORMATION, EXTRACTS FROM SCARCE BOOKS, ANECDOTES, &c. &c.

*A Letter written by Dr. Ferde, the Ordinary of Newgate.\**

"**SIR;** My opinion on the efficacy of executions can but be of little service to one, who has, perhaps, studied such matters for a considerable length of time, for the purpose of endeavouring at a reformation in them; whereas I have only viewed them as they occurred in the course of my professional attendance, without expecting that my opinion was ever likely to be inquired into, much less followed. From every thing I have witnessed on these melancholy occasions, I am decidedly clear, that executions, managed as they are at present, answer no end whatsoever, either for punishment or example. By executions the intention of punishment is defeated; which is, first, to make restoration, or recompence, to the injured party; second, to warn others; or, third, to amend the morals of the criminal. If I am plundered, first, the death of the plunderer may gratify my resentment, but it cannot restore my property; for the law gives the property found upon the criminal, not to him who has lost it, but to the king. Whenever I can find that the numbers in the Newgate Kalender are decreased, regularly, till at length the court at the Old Bailey is no longer of use—then, and not till then, I shall acknowledge, secondly, the utility of executions intimidating would-be rogues. With respect to the third point, (amendment of morals,) the rope puts a stop to every thing of that sort at once. But you may wish to learn the effect, which sentence of death has on the convict, in punishing his misdeeds, or causing him to set about the necessary work of repentance. From the moment he quits the court, every engine is set to work, both by him and his friends, to obtain a respite. During these exertions, vain and futile are all the attempts of the Ordinary, &c. to prevail on him to reflect on his awful situation, with respect to both worlds. The flattering hopes within his own breast are puffed up by his friends, into a certainty of saving his life; and till the very moment in which the unexpected warrant for execution arrives, death is the farthest thing from his thoughts. What is to be done now? Are a few days sufficient to

make his peace with God? Oh no! All is now hurry, confusion, and despair. Is this a time to instruct him in religion? Alas, he does not, perhaps, know the meaning of the word; nor does he conceive any benefit whatsoever to arise from the use of the name of a God, or a Saviour, except that of filling up his common conversation by explanatory blasphemy. To divert him now from any serious thoughts, he is daily visited by his supposed friends, relations, or colleagues; who (some with good motives, and some with bad) are urging him to die like a man; and in order to assist him in keeping up his spirits, each visitor brings a little something for a parting glass, which frequently terminates in the intoxication of the unfortunate sufferer, and precludes even the shadow of repentance, or contrition. Here you will be likely to attach blame to the prison-keepers for suffering liquors to be brought in; but what can they do? Women, who are chiefly the conveyors of them, conceal them in such ways as would be termed the grossest insult to search for. Besides, common humanity says, 'as he has only a few days to live, why add torture to torture, by keeping from him the consolation of his relatives?' &c. The result of all this (I speak generally) is stupidity at the hours of morning-devotion, enthusiasm, rhodomontade, and fruitless threats of revenge against his prosecutor, in the evening. At length the long-dreaded morning arrives; he knows he must quit this world, and he may as well do so with a good grace as not. 'What would his old associates say, if they were to behold him die soft? (as their phrase is.) His memory would be despised, and had in abomination.' He mounts the drop, resolute to appearance, however he may be within—bows to the spectators—shakes hands with the Ordinary, and such others as may be travelling the same journey; and (according to the expression in the dying-speech, which at this moment is publishing in all parts of London) 'is launched into eternity.'—This man is not punished, nor are his competers intimidated.—It is like the acting of a tragedy: a momentary tear of pity may be shed; but the next ribaldry obliterates the whole of the foregoing catastrophe.

"For argument sake, we will suppose the convict a true penitent, and resigned to his fate, with a full trust in,

\* Written in answer to an application made by Mr. Bentham.



or even a modest hope of salvation. The spectators are ignorant of what is passing in his mind, but they see his resignation in his countenance; consequently they are not intimidated by his example. We will suppose again, that some real contrition may arise in the breasts of some few who are under sentence; and they have deceived me as well as themselves. Let a respite come to these people who had given such hopes of reformation, and what is the consequence? I do not, at this moment, recollect one, who did not, almost immediately, forget all his good resolutions. Nay, I will take upon me to say, that some of the most wicked prisoners who are now in Newgate have been under sentence of death. One instance let me mention, of a man who was in that predicament, and who gave every hope of reformation. It was an arduous matter to get him respited; but it was done. He was removed from the cells, and his punishment mitigated to transportation. Meeting me a few days afterwards, he said, 'Here are the books you so kindly lent me; and having no further use for them, I return them with many thanks.'—But I ask, 'Why execute all!' Who shall say that the most hardened villain may not repent! Youth, health, ignorance, bad companions, &c. may lead a man to perpetrate the greatest crimes. The time, however, may come, when he looks back with horror on his past transgressions, and repents in dust and ashes. Execute him, and think of his hope of salvation? Why not leave him to God and his own conscience? Time, confinement, mortification, &c. may restore him, and cause 'joy in heaven':—regular labour,—the sweets arising from industry,—the want of bad companions, &c. all combine to recover the lost sheep, and 'the last state of that man is better than the first.' Who is he now that can take upon himself to determine, that it would have been better to put that man out of the world? I say, it is arrogating an authority which no frail mortal has a right to do. Some persons (who think they abound with the milk of human kindness) will say, 'I would punish no criminals with death, except they had committed murder, but that blood requires blood.'—'Whoso sheddeth man's blood,' &c. (Gen. ix. 6.) This, however, was not used by the Almighty, on a particular case; but as a desultory threatening. In the case of Abel's murder, (Gen. iv. 10,) instead of Cain being instantly punished with death, God says, 'The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.' What infliction, then, is passed upon

him? God says, (verse 12.) 'When thou tillest the ground, it shall not yield unto thee her strength. A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.' This seems more like sentence of transportation than sentence of death. The result of that first murder is this, that God himself sets a mark upon Cain, lest any one should attempt to kill him. (ver. 15.) This then is no sanction for our executions. We well know, that previous to the French revolution, all robbers, as well as murderers, were punished with death, being previously broken upon the wheel. The consequence of which was, that very few robberies were committed, without being attended with murder. Whereas, the mildness and uncertainty of our punishments are the reason why so very few murders are perpetrated among us. In short, when the criminal is dead, both the crime and the punishment are soon forgotten; let him live and labour, and the public may benefit by his example: whilst he himself is making some atonement for his crimes by his industry, and humbly endeavouring to make his peace with God.

"I have often reflected, and as often wondered, with what small degree of devotion or right frame of mind, certain persons have joined in the second prayer in our church service; 'Almighty God, who desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he may turn from his wickedness, and live:' strange it is that our RELIGION is so mild, and our LAWS so sanguinary! Instead of sparing the life of a criminal in order that he may turn from his wickedness, and try to live for ever, our criminal code nips him in the first bud of his sin, cutting off all hope of reformation, and destroying the possibility of atonement to the injured party.—I hear some one say, 'What is to be done with criminals? would you execute none?'—None: square the punishment to the several degrees of transgression, and plead the mild laws of God in your favour.

B. FORDE."

*The Fraternity of Unitarians and Deists mutually acknowledged.*

RICHARD CARLILE, the wretched vendor of infidel publications, frequently attempted, during his late trial, to show that as the late act had relieved the Unitarians of those penalties to which they were formerly exposed, it had consequently relieved the Deists also; for, said he, "an Unitarian is a Deist, and a Deist is a Unitarian." A Unitarian Christian is a non-descript. The Unitarians believe that Christ was



born in the natural way, but that he was delegated from God. They believe in some of the miracles, but not in all. In doing so, and particularly in denying the Trinity, they as much oppose the doctrine of Christianity as I do, who profess myself a Deist. They are Deists as much as I am." Although it certainly must be very disagreeable just now, to have such a shabby infidel claiming kindred with them, yet they will find it difficult to deny the relationship, when they remember what Dr. Priestley, said of Mr. Jefferson, the infidel.—"He is generally considered as an unbeliever: if so, however, he cannot be far from us." If therefore they admitted that Thomas Jefferson, Esq. President of the United States, &c. was so near of kin, they will not surely deny the claims of their quondam cousin of Fleet Street.

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*Anecdote of Cotton Mather and Dr. Franklin.*

DR. FRANKLIN, when young, visited this celebrated divine at his own dwelling; and describes in one of his letters the following circumstance: "He had received me in his library, and on my taking leave he showed me a shorter way out of the house, through a narrow passage crossed by a beam over head. We were still talking as I withdrew, he accompanying me behind, and I turning hastily towards him, when he said hastily, *stoop! stoop!* I did not understand him till I felt my head hit against the beam. He was a man that never missed any occasion of giving instruction, and upon this he said to me, 'You are young, and have the world before you; stoop as you go through it, and you will miss many hard thumps.' This advice, thus beat into my head, has frequently been of use to me, and I often think of it, when I see pride mortified, and misfortunes brought upon people by their carrying their heads too high."—*Franklin's Letters.*

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*Anecdote of John Newton, from a Letter of his to Mr. Barlass.*

"My first essay, as a preacher, was in a Dissenting meeting-house at Leeds, 1738, six years before I entered the establishment. I attempted it wholly extempore. But I thought my general and particular heads very methodically ranged in my mind. I opened my discourse with a passable exordium, and was beginning to think I should do pretty well: but, before I had spoken ten minutes, I was stopped like Hannibal upon the Alps. My ideas forsook

me, darkness and confusion filled up their place. I stood on a precipice, and could not advance a step forward. I stared at the people, and they at me. But I remained as silent as Friar Bacon's head; not a word more could I speak, but was forced to come down *re infecta*, and leave the people, some weeping, and some smiling. For two years afterwards, I could not look at the place without the heart-ache, and as it were saying to myself, *Hic Troja stetit*. I then began to compose, and my next essay (in another place) was with a written sermon: I did not feel much trepidation, having my discourse in my pocket, and not doubting I was able to read it: and I read it sure enough. But being near sighted, and rather ashamed to hold up my notes in view, I held my head close down to the cushion, and when I began I durst not take my eyes off for a moment, being impressed with a fear that I should not readily fix it again upon the right part of the page. Thus I hardly saw any body in the place during the whole time, and I looked much more like a dull school-boy poring over his lesson, than a preacher of the gospel; but I did not stop till I came to the end. I was not much less disconcerted this time than the former: What was to be done next? I had tried the two extremes to little purpose, and there seemed to me to be no medium between them. I looked sorrowfully at my sermon-book, and said, *Nec tecum, nec sine te*.—However, notwithstanding all my disappointments and discouragements, the Lord was pleased at length to admit me into his vineyard, and to open my mouth. Of all the maxims I have met with about preaching, I most admire that of Luther, *Bene precasse, est bene studuisse*.

— — —  
*The Rev. Mr. Simeon on Baptismal Regeneration.*

"It will not be amiss to examine, briefly, the different tendencies of these opposite doctrines, and to ascertain their comparative worth, in point of *sobriety*, in point of practical efficacy, and, lastly, in reference to their final issue.

"Which has the preference in point of *sobriety*;—the doctrine of a new and spiritual birth, by the operation of the spirit of God, or that of baptism being the new birth? It is objected to the former doctrine, that it is enthusiastic, and accompanied with many absurd and baneful errors; viz. that its advocates insist on sudden impulses, which, irresistibly, and without any co-operation on our parts, at some particular time, that may at all subsequent periods be

referred to, convert the soul to God. Now we have before denied, that the advocates for the new birth give any such representation of it, or that it is, in its own nature, associated with any such things.

"But, now, observe the doctrine of our adversaries, viz. of those who identify baptism with the new birth: it is curious to observe to what an extent they fall into the very errors, which they impute to us.

"They say that we are born again in baptism; consequently, they first make our new birth sudden. Next, they make it *irresistible*; for the child cannot withstand the power of the priest.—Next, they make it *without any co-operation on our part*: for the child is wholly passive. Next, they make it *arbitrary*, according to the will of man, who may hasten it, or delay it, or prevent it, exactly as he pleases; whereas it is expressly said of all christians, that they are 'born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.' Next, they make it so *determinable in point of time*, that not the person himself only, but the whole world, also, may know it, by consulting the parish register. And, lastly, they are assured of it, not only without any evidence at all, but in the very face of all imaginable evidence to the contrary.

"Who, I will ask, are the *enthusiasts* now? I will further ask, whether the wildest fanatic that can be found at this day in Christendom entertains notions half so *fanatical* as these?" — *Simcon's Appeal to Men of Wisdom and Candour*, p. 49—51.

#### *Bishop Warburton's Argument for the Test Laws.*

"HITHERTO we have considered the alliance between church and state which produces an establishment, only under its most simple form, i. e. where there is but one religion in the state. But it may so happen, that, either at the time of convention or afterwards, there may be more than one. If there be more than one, at the time of convention, the alliance is made by the state with the largest of the religious societies. It is fit it should be so, because the larger the religious society is, (where the difference is not in essentials,) the more enabled it will be to answer the ends of the alliance, as having the greatest number under its influence. It is scarce possible it should be otherwise; because the two societies being composed of the same individuals, the greatly prevailing religion must have a majority of its members in the assemblies of state, who will naturally prefer their own religion to others. With this is the alliance

made, and a full toleration granted to all the rest, but restrained from injuring that which is established by the guard of a test law.

"Hence we may see:—

"1. The reason and equity of the episcopal church's being the established church of England, and the presbyterian the established church of Scotland, an absurdity in point of right, which our adversaries imagined the friends of an establishment could never get clear of.

"2. From hence we may discover the duration of this alliance. It is *perpetual*, but not *irrevocable*: i. e. it *subsists so long as the church thereby established maintains its superiority of extent*; WHICH, WHEN IT LOSES TO ANY CONSIDERABLE DEGREE, THE UNION IS DISSOLVED: for the united church being then no longer able to perform its part of the convention, which is formed on reciprocal conditions, the state by that failure becomes disengaged, and a new alliance is of necessity entered into with the now prevailing church, for the reasons before given. Thus, of old, was the alliance between the *Pagan church* and the empire of Rome dissolved, and the Christian united to the state in its place. Thus, again, in these latter times, the alliance between the *Popish church* and the kingdom of England was broke, and another made with the *Protestant church* in its stead. If these different religions arise after the alliance hath been formed, whenever they become considerable, then is a test law necessary, for the security of the established church; for when there are diversities of religions in a state, each of which thinks itself the only true, or, at least, the most pure, every one aims at advancing itself on the ruins of the rest, which it calls bringing into conformity with itself; and, when reason fails, each attempts to do it by the civil aid, which can be only brought about by the attempter's getting into the public administration. But when it happens that one of these religions is established, and all the rest under a toleration, then it is that these latter, still more inflamed as stimulated with envy at the advantages the established church enjoys, act in concert, and proceed with joint forces to disturb its peace. In this imminent danger, the established church demands the promised aid of the state, which gives her a *test law* for her security; whereby the entrance into the administration (the only way that mischief to the established church is effected) is shut to all but the members of that church. Thus a test law took its birth, whether at or after the time of alliance." — *Warburton's Alliance between Church and State*.

## RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

## I. STATISTICAL VIEW OF DISSENTERS IN ENGLAND AND WALES.

Wishing to make this department of our work as complete as possible, we earnestly beg our correspondents to furnish us with all documents and information relating to it, addressed to the Editors, at the Publisher's. To those who have already obliged us, by communicating valuable materials, we again avail ourselves of the opportunity to return our sincere and grateful acknowledgments: while we cannot but regret, that any of our applications, made in respectful terms, and post paid, should have had to encounter an extraordinary neglect on the part of those to whom they were made. To that circumstance, and to that alone, must be ascribed the absence, in some few instances, of names and dates, with which Dissenting Ministers on the spot, had they been so disposed, could, without difficulty, have furnished us. But, while we have to regret this inconvenience in the prosecution of our monthly labours, we derive great satisfaction from the knowledge, that the materials which are within our reach are truly valuable, and that our contingent resources are highly respectable. Of this, the interesting accounts which we have already had it in our power to lay before the public, afford, we conceive, abundant proof.

## CAMBRIDGESHIRE.

(Continued from page 698.)

ROYSTON is an ancient town, bleakly situated on the border of the county, where it joins to Hertfordshire. There are two Dissenting congregations in it, of the Independent denomination, whose places of worship are both in the county of Cambridge, and are distinguished from each other by being designated the *old* and the *new* meeting. The foundation of dissent in this place appears to have been laid by the labours of Mr. NATHANIEL BALL, of whom Calamy, and after him Palmer, in his *Nonconformists' Memorial*, vol. ii. page 41, gives a most interesting account. When he quitted Barley, a village in Hertfordshire, about three miles from Royston, in 1660, he came hither, when the town was in a state of great profaneness and irreligion; and, with a holy zeal for God, and love to souls, laid himself out in an extraordinary manner. "He set up a lecture on the market-day, which was blessed with great success. The trade of wickedness," as Dr. Calamy expressed it, "was spoiled here, and some of the worst of sinners were wrought upon, and proved eminent in grace. He had his public hour of prayer daily between twelve and one o'clock, to which many christians resorted." On the memorable Bartholomew Day, 1662, he quitted his public ministry, to the great grief of his parish, and the christians of that neighbourhood, but continued some time in the town. His well-informed conscience prevented his conforming, though he had a large family, which ultimately increased to thirteen children; but he occasionally preached to, and exhorted such as came in his way. It is most probable that to

these zealous occasional, though unsanctioned labours of Mr. Ball, is to be attributed the continuance of a spirit of piety, and a savour of pure religion in Royston, during the dark period which immediately succeeded the Bartholomew Act. He died, September the 8th, 1681, in the fifty-eighth year of his age. There is a book, written by him, and published after his death, entitled, "*Spiritual Bondage and Freedom*," to which some account of him is prefixed. From it we learn, that, judging it to be his duty to continue to preach after the passing of the Oxford Act, many persons at *Cambridge, Epping, Bayford*, and other places, to which he stood related, reaped the benefit of his labours. Calamy (*Continuation*, page 157,) states, that Mr. JOHN HUNT, second son of Mr. William Hunt, who was ejected from Sutton in this county, was some time at *Royston*, and afterwards at Northampton and Newport Pagnell. We have not now, however, any historical memorial of a Dissenting church in the town, earlier than the year 1700, when that which is now the old meeting was built for the use of a congregation, then under the pastoral care of the Rev. WILLIAM BEDFORD. The records of this church, which at that time consisted of sixty-five members, commence in the year 1705. The articles of their faith, and the covenant with one another, which they entered into, as well as a supplementary resolution of the church, by which they, in fact, waved their right to exact subscription to their articles from candidates for church communion, and which, it is very remarkable, bears date at the close of the same year with the Articles themselves, are here given at length, for the information of our readers, as desiderata in the history of Nonconformity, of rare

occurrence. The articles are thirty-two in number, and are as follows:—

Articles of faith as maintained in the Church of Christ, at Royston.

1. We believe there is one God, who hath life, goodness, and blessedness in himself; and in the Unity of the Godhead there be three persons of one substance.

2. We believe that God did from eternity, by his wise counsel, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass; and from eternity did freely choose a certain number of Adam's lapsed race, to obtain salvation by his Son Christ, for the magnifying of his rich grace, passing by others for the glorifying of his justice.

3. We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be given by divine inspiration, and to contain in them all things that concern God's glory and man's salvation.

4. We believe that God made man after his own image, writing his law in his heart, and giving him power to fulfil the same, which, while he did, he was happy.

5. We believe God doth by his providence govern and order all things, from the greatest to the least.

6. We believe our first parents sinned in eating the forbidden fruit, and that the guilt of Adam's sin is imputed to all his posterity, descending from him in a way of ordinary generation, unto condemnation; and that a corrupt nature is derived from him to them.

7. We believe that God did, upon the fall, enter into a covenant of grace, and in it promised life and salvation to all that should believe in Christ; and that the elect might lay hold on him, he promised to send his spirit to that end; and that the Old and New Testaments differ, not in substance, but in dispensation.

8. We believe that it pleased God, in his eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the second person in the sacred Trinity to be salvation for all the elect.

9. We believe that God did endow man with freedom of will in that which was good; but by the fall he hath lost the same, and is altogether unable, whilst in a state of nature, to will any thing that is spiritually good.

10. We believe that all those who are predestinated to life, shall be effectually drawn to Christ by the spirit and word of God, and shall, by grace renewing their minds and wills, freely close with Christ for their salvation.

11. We believe that those thus called are freely justified, by God pardoning their sins, and accepting their persons, for Christ's righteousness alone impu-

ted to them, and received by faith; which faith is wrought in them by the Spirit of God; and though we are justified by faith alone, as it apprehends Christ and his righteousness; yet it is not alone in those that are justified, but all other saving graces accompany it, and it is no dead faith, but works by love.

12. We believe that all those thus justified are made partakers of the grace of adoption, in which God takes them into the number of his family, and they have a right to the privileges of his children.

13. We believe that these are sanctified by the Spirit of God dwelling in them.

14. We believe that the faith which is wrought in the hearts of the elect, as it justifies, lays hold on Christ only; but yet this faith believes all God's word, yields obedience to all his commands, trembles at his threatenings, embraces the promises, and differs in degrees in the saints.

15. We believe that repentance unto life is an evangelical grace, and that the doctrine of it ought to be preached.

16. We believe that good works are only those which God has commanded in his word, and being done in faith, they please God in and through Christ, and are evidences of our faith.

17. We believe that the saints cannot finally fall away from grace; and that their standing depends on God's free election, flowing from his unchangeable love.

18. We believe that the saints may come to have an assurance of their interest in Christ in this life; although assurance is not of the essence of faith, and believers may be saved without it.

19. We believe that the moral law of God bindeth all men, believers as well as others: neither did Christ dissolve, but strengthen it; although believers are not under it as a covenant of works to be justified by it or condemned; neither are they under the curse of it; yet they are under it as a rule of life, to direct them in their duty, and how to walk.

20. We believe that Christ hath purchased liberty for believers under the gospel from all laws binding the conscience, only his own; and that he alone is Lord of the conscience; and that man is not to impose any thing, in matters of faith or worship, besides or contrary to his word: and that this liberty is not to destroy any lawful power of the magistrates.

21. We believe that all religious worship is to be given to Father, Son, and Spirit, and that the morality of the Sabbath remains for ever, and that it

ought to be employed in God's service.

22. We believe that a lawful oath is a part of religious worship.

23. We believe that the Lord hath ordained civil magistrates to be under him for his own glory and the public good; and that he hath armed them with power to defend the good, and to punish the evil doers; and that it is the duty of the saints to pray for them, to honour them, and to pay tribute to them.

24. We believe that marriage is between one man and one woman, and that it is lawful for all souls to marry who are able with judgment to give their consent; yet it is the duty of Christians to marry "only in the Lord."

25. We believe that the church of Christ, as indivisible, doth consist of all the Elect, under Christ their head.

26. We believe a particular gospel church is a separate company of visible saints, or believers, with their seed, associated together in a special bond of unity, for the enjoyment of Christ and each other in Christ's ordinances.

27. We believe that there are but two sacraments ordained by Christ—Baptism, and the Lord's Supper; and that these are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace, and that they ought not to be administered by any but one lawfully ordained to the ministry.

28. We believe that the bodies of men after death return to dust, and their souls to God; and that then the souls of believers are received to bliss, but the wicked are turned into hell.

29. We believe that the second person in the Trinity did assume a true body and a reasonable soul, in conjunction with his divine person, being born of the Virgin Mary.

30. We believe that Christ was crucified, dead, and buried, and that after the space of about three days, he arose again, and ascended to the right hand of the Father.

31. We believe the resurrection of the dead.

32. We believe God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by Christ; and that all shall be brought forth at that day, both men and fallen angels.

*The Covenant of the Dissenting Brethren, in Royston.*

We whose names are hereunder written, having given ourselves to God, do now mutually and solemnly covenant, according to the will of God, to walk together in the order of the gospel; promising not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, but to endeavour to hold the unity of the spirit in the

bond of peace, and to mark such as cause divisions, so as to avoid them. We do also promise to submit ourselves to the censures of the church; and these things we will do, as God shall prosper us, to our lives' end.

(Here follow the names of the members, amounting in number to 65.)

No particular date is prefixed to the above; but in a subsequent page of the book stands the following important agreement of the church:—

December 28, 1705. The church agreed upon these following things:—

1. That all persons to be admitted to this church, shall be at liberty to join themselves to it either by oral confession of faith before the whole society, or by making confession of faith more privately to the pastor and two or three brethren, (they communicating the same to the church,) or by giving in their experience in writing.

2. To manifest a true catholic spirit, it was agreed upon, that any godly persons of the Presbyterian, the Congregational, or the Baptist persuasion, if they desire to communicate with this church, either occasionally or constantly, shall not be debarred of such a privilege, provided they behave themselves peaceably and according to the rules of christian charity.

3. No persons shall be admitted members of this church, that have not been baptized, either in their infancy, or when adult, until they submit to that ordinance.

Mr. Bedford continued to preside over the church for many years. His name occurs as pastor, in the church book, as late as the year 1726-7; but it is not known, precisely, in what manner, or at what time he quitted them. In 1733, however, they were without a pastor; and on the 26th of October, agreed to receive the Rev. THOMAS GIBBONS, father of the late *Doctor Gibbons*, of *Harbardashers' Hall*, London, into their communion; this appears to have been (and it was usual in independent churches in such cases) a preliminary step to his becoming their pastor; for on April the 5th, 1783, the church met, and unanimously gave him a call to the pastoral office, which he at the same time accepted; and on June the 28th of that year, (to use the unassuming language of the time,) "set down as pastor among them," in the presence of several aged and other ministers. This pious and excellent man continued his ministry till the year 1757, with unblemished character; and with good success. Mr. ROBERT WELLS was his successor. He had been educated in the Academy at Mile-End; was invited



to preach, on probation, on the 20th of January, 1758; unanimously called to the pastoral office on the 24th of March, and ordained on the 27th of July, over a church which consisted of eighty members; to which, during a ministry of twenty-three years, he added sixty-three; but, in the beginning of the year 1781, his health began rapidly to decline, and he died at Bath on the 9th of March, leaving about forty-three members in his church. The meeting-house was considerably enlarged during his ministry. He was succeeded in the following May by Mr. W. JAMESON, formerly of Wolverhampton, who was pastor of this church, till the year 1790, when his health was so much impaired as to afford very little hope of his being able to continue his work, and, with the unanimous concurrence of his friends, after long debility, he resigned. About this time the Rev. HABAKKUK CRABB, of Stowmarket, was invited to preach to the congregation, as a probationer; but he proving unacceptable to a part of the members and hearers; about one half of the congregation, previous to his settlement, peaceably withdrew for separate worship, and eventually formed themselves into a distinct church, and built that which is now called the *New Meeting-house*. The following is "a declaration of the principles of the church of Christ, assembling at the old meeting-house, Royston; dated the 20th of February, 1791."

"As a religious society, favoured with the light of revelation, believing the testimony of the Scriptures, that 'Jesus is the Christ,' we disclaim all human authority in matters of conscience, acknowledging but 'one master, even Christ,' and wish ever to keep in mind that as we are servants of 'one Lord,' and not legislators in the christian church, our employment should be, not to make laws for our fellow christians, but to understand and obey those which Jesus Christ hath commanded."

Mr. Crabb retained charge of that part of the church and congregation which continued to worship in the old meeting-house, till about Christmas, 1794, when he died. After his death, they invited the Rev. W. PARNHAM to be their minister and pastor, in which relations he is still with them.

*Royston New Meeting.*—It has been stated above, that the church and congregation, which assemble in this place, arose out of a separation, in the year 1791, from that which assembles at the old meeting. The ground of that separation, as stated in the printed case, circulated by the seceders at the time, appears to have been a conviction, on their part, that what are emphatically called the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel had not been duly dispensed, while Mr. Crabb occupied the pulpit. The seceders first assembled for worship in the dwelling-house of one of their number, till, by their own exertions, and with the aid of the religious public, they were enabled to build their present meeting-house, in which, till the year 1793, they were supplied by various ministers; but principally by students from the academy at Hoxton. In 1794, Mr. THOMAS TOWNE, who had visited Royston, as a supply, by the appointment of the late Dr. Simpson, received and accepted the unanimous call of the church at the new meeting, to be their pastor, and he has continued to occupy that pulpit with great success to the present time. A front gallery was erected for the accommodation of an increased number of hearers, in the same year in which Mr. Towne entered upon his charge; to which two side galleries were added in 1807. In 1818, the meeting-house was considerably enlarged; and it is now numerously attended. Since the separation, Mr. Jameson, the former pastor of the first church, has attended occasionally at both the old and new meeting-houses.

(To be continued.)

## II. MISCELLANEOUS.

*The Essex Association to the Congregational Union in Scotland.*

"In our Numbers for June and July we inserted copious extracts from an interesting Address to the Congregational Churches in England, containing information respecting the state of religion in Scotland, which, we understand, has occasioned considerable surprise in the South; and which appears likely to excite a beneficial feeling of sympathy and fellowship. The Essex Association has, in a manner worthy of its known character,

taken up the business; and we are happy to present to our readers the following REPLY to the Address from Scotland:—

"The Associated Congregational Ministers in the County of Essex and its Vicinity, to the Committee of the Congregational Union in Scotland.

"Brethren in the Lord;

"Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied. We heartily thank you for the ADDRESS which you have sent for distribution among the Congre-



gational churches in England. Having, at our last annual meeting, received a few copies, we have dispersed them as extensively as possible, with a view to promote the objects you wish to accomplish. It is refreshing to our spirits, to hear of the union, prosperity, and increase of the churches in Scotland, which hold the same evangelical doctrines with ourselves, and the same views of the order of Christ's kingdom. And we are desirous, in reply to your Address, of testifying to you the interest you have in our prayers, and our readiness to afford that co-operation in making known the gospel of the Son of God, which you so affectionately and reasonably require.

The information communicated by your Address, respecting the state of religion in Scotland, and, particularly, the Highland and Northern districts, has deeply affected our minds; and we cordially sympathize with our brethren, whom you describe as preaching the gospel in those parts with unusual diligence and toil. We fully concur with you in appreciating their labours very highly, and in thinking, that to assist them in their work, and to add to their number, is of great importance, and demands the cheerful support of Christians in the southern part of our island.

The general purposes to which the funds of your Union are applied, appear to us likely, under the divine blessing, to repay your anxious and zealous cares, in the promotion of our Redeemer's spiritual kingdom among your own countrymen. These purposes having been made known to most of the Congregational churches in Essex, under the pastoral care of the Associated Ministers, and also to a few others, whose pastors are not members of our Body, a small sum has been most cheerfully raised, as the first fruits of your Address, towards the support of your funds. In the name of those churches, we now transmit to you sixty pounds. It would have been gratifying to us to have presented to you a larger sum, but it is as much as the numerous and urgent calls upon Christian liberality in the present day would allow us to propose or expect on this occasion; especially as we indulge the hope of seeing a strong feeling excited throughout England, by an extensive circulation of your impressive ADDRESS. Should other county associations follow the example of this, a large sum will be raised with very little trouble, and *without interfering with any other object*. It will give us much pleasure to witness among the brethren of our denomination a general disposition to assist our laborious friends in the North, and to add to the

supplies by which your Union is endeavouring to accomplish important and extensive plans of usefulness.

"Accept, dear brethren, the assurances of our Christian regard and fellowship. We rejoice to hear good tidings of your faith and charity, and pray that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing; being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness. Brethren, pray for us."

"Signed by the Committee appointed for conducting this business, by order and in behalf of the Associated Congregational Ministers in the County of Essex and its Vicinity;

W. CHAPLIN, Bishop Stortford.

RICHARD FROST, Dunmow.

THOMAS CRAIG, Bocking.

JOHN BLACKBURN, Finchfield."

October 18, 1819.

In laying before our readers the foregoing document, we cannot refrain from expressing our hope, that this is the beginning of a more active union and fellowship among Congregational churches than has hitherto existed. The most beneficial results might be expected from a general attention to this important object. At any rate, such opportunities as that afforded by the Address from Scotland, should be willingly seized and improved. As yet, we suppose the Congregational Union in Scotland might, in reference to England, adopt the language of the Apostle Paul, and say to the Essex brethren, "No churches have communicated with us, as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only." But surely the example is worthy of imitation. And if our information be correct, the *mode* adopted in this case, is such as is practicable every where. It was not intended to contribute a large sum, lest it should in any way interfere with other channels of benevolence; but merely to raise a trifle from the county, as a testimony of good will and Christian fellowship towards those who are struggling with difficulties and hardships, in promoting the knowledge of Christ in a dark and dreary part of our own country. We understand that the sum specified in the letter was raised by a small donation from each church; a pound from some; from others two; and from a few, a little more. The Address was read at several church-meetings; and at others, where a copy could not be procured, the extracts from it given in this work.

*Bethel Seamen's Union, British and Foreign.*

On Friday evening, November 12th, 1819, a general meeting of this Society was held at the City of London Tavern, Sir George Mouat Keith, Bart. Commander in the Royal Navy, in the Chair, supported on his right by C. M. Fabian, Esq. Captain in the Royal Navy, and surrounded by several naval officers, merchants, captains of merchant ships, and gentlemen, who had been engaged in various marine services for many years; about two hundred seamen and cabin boys were also present. The gallant Chairman opened the business of the Meeting with a most able address, urging attention to the immortal interests of sailors. The Rev. G. C. Smith, of Penzance, explained the objects of the Society: first, to unite and extend the prayer meetings now established in various ships on the River Thames; secondly, to ascertain the state of British seamen in every sea-port town throughout Great Britain, both in the navy and merchant service, and adopt such measures, in connection with friends in maritime towns, as may best conduce to their moral and religious interest; thirdly, to establish foreign correspondence, and solicit information and direction as to the best means of doing good to foreign sailors, so that the limits of this Society shall be the circumference of the globe; fourthly, to publish a Sailor's Magazine monthly, for the improvement of seamen, and the communication of general information concerning this interesting portion of the human race. The Rev. Mr. Irons, of Camberwell, the Rev. Mr. Ward, missionary from Serampore, and the Rev. Mr. Allen, now supplying at the Tabernacle, deeply interested the Meeting with their remarks. C. M. Fabian, Esq. as an officer of long standing in his Majesty's Navy, furnished a noble testimony of the value of pious officers and seamen, and added his hearty wishes for prosperity to this excellent Institution. He was followed by the Rev. Mr. Brown, formerly of the Navy; and Captain Orton, Lieutenant E. Smith, and J. Arnold, powerfully advocated the cause of seamen. Captain Wilkins described the rapid progress of religion among seamen. G. F. Anguss, Esq. of Newcastle, as a merchant and ship-owner, considered the Society fully entitled to the countenance and support of every gentleman interested in shipping. — Stevens, Esq. strongly recommended the Institution. Mr. T. Phillips related some interesting anecdotes. — Black, Esq. a gentleman who had been for many years at sea, added his testimony; and Mr. Smith closed, by

the relation of a most affecting anecdote, concerning the humanity and heroism of the crew of the Robert and Margaret.

All communications, we understand, are to be addressed to the Secretaries, the Rev. Mr. Brown, or Mr. T. Phillips, Cox's Quay, Thames-street.

A general meeting of captains and seamen of this Union, for prayer, is to be held on board the Floating Chapel, shortly, by the kind permission of the Port of London Society.

*Congregational School.*

As it may be gratifying to many of our readers in the country, and to the friends and supporters of this Institution in general, to know the result of the election, which took place on the 27th of October last, we have the pleasure to inform them that the successful candidates on that occasion were:—Julius Mark, son of the late Rev. Thomas Mark, of Weathersfield, in Essex;—Samuel Howell, son of the Rev. William Howell, of Knaresborough, in Yorkshire;—Evan Davies, son of the Rev. David Davies, of Lanstephan, Carmarthenshire; and Philip Jabez Davies, son of the Rev. Joseph Davies, of Ulverston, in Lancashire.

*Northamptonshire Association.*

THE Northamptonshire Association of Independent Ministers held their Half-yearly Meeting at Daventry, September the 23rd, 1819. The Rev. B. Hobson, of Welford, began the morning service with prayer and reading the scriptures; and the Rev. William Scott, of Rowell, prayed before the sermons. The Rev. William Morgan, of Kilsby, and the Rev. J. Horsey, of Northampton, preached: the former from Psalm cxv. 1.; and the latter from Colossians iii. 16.—“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.” The Rev. H. Knight, of Yelvertoft, concluded the morning service with prayer. In the afternoon, the business of the Association was transacted; the Rev. J. Whittenbury, pastor of the church at Daventry, in the Chair. The annual collections and donations of the Missionary Fund for 1819, were received, and appropriated to the different Societies. The Provident Fund, for the relief of aged and afflicted ministers and their families, belonging to this Association, has now 2,200*l.* standing in the funds, collected by the ministers and congregations since 1811, when only 10*l.* 10*s.* was received. In the evening, the Rev. J. Renals, of Wellingborough,

prayed; and the Rev. J. Robertson, of Stretton, Warwickshire, preached from 1 Corinthians i. 23, 24.; "But we preach Christ crucified," &c. The Rev. William Nutcutt, of Ashly, concluded with prayer. The next Half-yearly Meeting to be held at Welford, the third Thursday in April, 1820.

#### *Liberty of the Press in Prussia.*

THE most remarkable of the articles in the edict of censorship issued by his Majesty, in consequence of the resolutions of the Diet of Frankfort, is, "All books and writings published in our states shall be subject to the approbation of a censorship, and can neither be printed nor sold without permission given in writing. It will not prevent the sincere and discreet investigation of truth. It will impose no restraint upon writers, and will not shackle the book-selling trade. Its object is to prevent whatever is contrary to the principles of religion in general, without making any distinction between the opinions and doctrines of the different communions and sects tolerated in the state; to suppress whatever attacks morals and manners; to resist the fanatical mania of mixing the truths of religion and politics; and to prevent the confusion of ideas," &c.

#### *Slavery in America.*

A most interesting pamphlet has recently come into our hands, from America, the subject of which must prove highly gratifying to every philanthropic mind, entitled; "Minutes of the Proceedings of the fifteenth American Convention, for promoting the Abolition of Slavery and improving the condition of the African race; assembled at Philadelphia, on the 10th day of December, 1816; and continued by adjournment, until the fifteenth of the same month inclusive."

The President in his circular, by which the meeting was convened, remarks; "The recent proceedings, in some of the Southern States, by which persons, who have been imported as slaves, in contravention of the laws of the United States, have been sold into slavery, and the proceeds of this outrage against humanity, morality, and justice, received into the treasury of the United States, has justly excited universal indignation. The wide and firm progress of opinion in favour of emancipation and abolition among numbers of our most distinguished fellow-citizens, and the benefits which may result from united efforts in their

favour, while these sentiments prevail, demand attention. These are among the subjects which will claim the consideration of the convention.

The assembly was composed of members from two distinct societies at New York, Pennsylvania, Columbia, Delaware, Kent County, and Easton: from each of which, with the exceptions of Kent County, communications, suggesting subjects for the consideration of the meeting, were read, and referred to a committee to report to the assembly.

In noticing the causes of opposition to the efforts of the friends to emancipation, the Society at New York observe; "It is to be regretted that an argument is drawn from the fact of the improved condition of slaves in this country, which improvement may be traced to the active, and unremitting exertions of the friends of universal emancipation. It is said that slaves are kindly treated; that they have sufficient to eat, are well clad, and that they are contented in their situations; that if they were made free and compelled to support themselves, they would not be as well off as the particulars stated; and the friends of abolition are requested to compare the condition of slaves, thus provided for, with that of some of those persons of colour who are free, but who are nevertheless among the most idle and dissolute to be found in society. This Society are well aware that reasoning of this sort is almost always resorted to by slaveholders themselves, and they regret to find, that, in some instances, it has affected the minds of those who are well affected to emancipation; thereby either paralyzing their exertions, or rendering them neutral in the controversy. It would be uncharitable to suppose that all, in whose mouths this reasoning is found, are insincere: no, the truth of the remark is very obvious in the present case, that men are more frequently incorrect in their opinions than in their feelings."

Among much important and interesting matter, we find the following affecting appeal: "When it is seen that in some portions of our country, the African is degraded almost to the level of the brute; when it may be seen that to cultivate his mind is practicable, he is still neglected; nay, more, he is forbidden in some States of the Union to receive that pittance of cultivation, which the hand of philanthropy would afford him in his degraded state: the light of knowledge is debarr'd his mind by solemn municipal provisions.

"The Society forbear to express the mingled feeling of indignation and regret which arises in their bosoms at the

recollection, that such things are in a country so enlightened as our own; nor do they deem it their province to denounce maledictions; but if there be an Almighty Governor, who delights in justice, and who will judge men according to their actions, they would not like to be the individuals who aid, abet, or consent to any regulations which oppose the growth and expansion of the human mind. We do not hesitate to declare to the world, that our object is not simply to meliorate the physical condition of the sons of Africa: we will never rest satisfied till every exertion in our power has been made to emancipate their minds. We long for the time, when this language may be addressed to every African, and inculcated in his mind;—“Thou art an accountable being; thou wast born with a right, equal to that of any other man, to life, liberty, and enjoyment; thou art an heir of immortality.”

“As ignorant beings, they have claims upon our philanthropy; but as beings who owe their wretchedness to us, justice demands, that to us they should also owe their deliverance.”

This very spirited communication is concluded with the following request, accompanied by a memorial to Congress on the subject.

“In all the discussions in Congress, on the subject of South American independence, a provision for the welfare of the African race has never formed an item. It is, therefore, requested, that the application on the part of this Society may be seconded by the zeal and influence of the Convention; and we do hope, that the Legislature of our country, if they ever consent to acknowledge the independence of any or all of the Spanish colonies, will endeavour to obtain from them an abandonment of the Slave Trade.”

“We intend to furnish our Readers with further extracts in a future Number.”

*Speech of Charles Phillips, Esq. at the City of London Auxiliary Bible Society.*

“MAY it please your Lordship, Ladies, and Gentlemen: Although I have not had the honour either of proposing or seconding any of your Resolutions, still, as a native of that country so pointedly alluded to in your Report, I hope I may be indulged in a few observations. The crisis in which we are placed is, I hope, a sufficient apology in itself for any intrusion; but I find such apology is rendered more than unnecessary by the courtesy of this reception. Indeed, my Lord, when we see the omens which are every day arising, when we see blasphemy openly avowed, when we see the Scriptures audaciously

ridiculed, when in this Christian monarchy the den of the Republican and the Deist yawns for the unwary in your most public thoroughfares, when martins are ostentatiously opened, where the moral poison may be purchased, whose subtle venom enters the very soul, when infidelity has become an article of commerce, and man's perdition may be cheapened at the stall of every pedlar, no friend of society should continue silent; it is no longer a question of political privilege, of sectarian controversy, of theological discussion; it is become a question, whether Christianity itself shall stand, or whether we shall let go the firm anchor of our faith, and drift, without chart, or helm, or compass, into the shoreless ocean of impiety and blood! I despise as much as any man the whine of bigotry; I will go as far as any man for rational liberty; but I will not depose my God to deify the infidel, or tear in pieces the charter of the state, and grope for a constitution among the murky pigeon-holes of every creedless, lawless, infuriated regicide.”

[After referring at some length to a recent trial, Mr. Phillips describes the effects of the defendant's conduct in the following affecting language.]

“He has literally disseminated a moral plague, against which, even the nation's quarantine can scarcely avail us. It has poisoned the fresh blood of infancy, it has disheartened the last hope of age; if his own account of its circulation be correct, hundreds of thousands must be this instant tainted with the infectious venom, whose sting dies not with the destruction of the body. Imagine not, because the pestilence smites not at once, that its fatality is the less certain; imagine not, because the lower orders are the earliest victims, that the most elevated will not suffer in their turn: the most mortal chillness begins at the extremities; and you may depend upon it, nothing but time and apathy are wanting to change this healthful land into a charnel house, where murder, anarchy, and prostitution, and the whole hell-brood of infidelity, will quaff the heart's blood of the consecrated and the noble.”

“My Lord, I am the more indignant at these designs, because they are sought to be concealed in the disguise of liberty. It is the duty of every real friend of liberty to tear her mask from the fiend who has usurped it. No, no; this is not our island goddess, bearing the mountain freshness on her cheek, and scattering the valley's bounty from her hand, known by the lights that herald her fair presence, the peaceful virtues that attend her path, and the long blaze of glory that lingers in

her train: it is a demon, speaking fair indeed, tempting our faith with airy hopes and visionary realms, but even within the folding of its mantle hiding the bloody symbol of its purpose. Hear not its sophistry; guard your child against it; draw round your homes the consecrated circle which it dares not enter. You will find an amulet in the religion of your country, it is the great mound raised by the Almighty for the protection of humanity; it stands between you and the lava of human passions; and, oh, believe me, if you stand tamely by while it is basely undermined, the fiery deluge will roll on, before which all that you hold dear, or venerable, or sacred, will wither into ashes. Believe no one who tells you that the friends of freedom are now, or ever were, the enemies of religion. They know too well that rebellion against God cannot prove the basis of government for man, and the loftiest structure impiety can raise is but the Babel monument of impotence; its pride mocking the builders with a moment's strength, and then covering them with inevitable confusion. Do you want an example? Only look to France. The microscopic vision of your rabble blasphemers has not sight enough to contemplate the mighty minds which commenced her revolution. The wit, the sage, the orator, the hero, the whole family of genius, furnished forth their treasures, and gave them nobly to the nation's exigence; they had great provocation, they had a glorious cause, they had all that human potency could give them. But they relied too much upon this human potency; they abjured their God, and, as a natural consequence, they murdered their King; they called their polluted deities from the brothel, and the fall of the idol extinguished the flame of the altar. They crowded the scaffold with all their country held of genius or of virtue; and when the peerage and the prelacy were exhausted, the mob-executioner of to-day became the mob-victim of to-morrow; no sex was spared, no age respected, no suffering pitied; and all this they did in the sacred name of liberty, though in the deluge of human blood they left not a mountain top for the ark of liberty to rest on. But Providence was neither "dead nor sleeping." It mattered not that for a moment their impiety seemed to prosper; that victory panted after their ensanguined banners; that as their insatiate eagle soared against the sun, he seemed but to replume his wing, and to renew his vision,—it was only for a moment, and you see at last that in the very banquet of their triumph, the Almighty's ven-

geance blazed upon the wall, and their diadem fell from the brow of the idolater.

"My Lord, I will abide by the precepts, admire the beauty, revere the mysteries, and, as far as in me lies, practise the mandates of this sacred volume; and should the ridicule of earth and the blasphemy of hell assail me, I shall console myself by the contemplation of those blessed spirits, who, in the same holy cause, have toiled, and shone, and suffered. In the 'goodly fellowship of the saints,'—in the 'noble army of the martyrs,' in the society of the great, and good, and wise of every nation; if my sinfulness be not cleansed, and my darkness illumined, at least my pretensionless submission may be excused. If I err with the luminaries I have chosen for my guides, I confess myself captivated by the loveliness of their aberrations. If they err, it is in an heavenly region; if they wander, it is in fields of light; if they aspire, it is at all events a glorious daring; and, rather than sink with infidelity into the dust, I am content to cheat myself with their vision of eternity. It may indeed be nothing but delusion, but then I err with the disciples of philosophy and of virtue, with men who have drank deep at the fountain of human knowledge, but who dissolved not the pearl of their salvation in the draught.

"With men like these, my Lord, I shall remain in error; nor shall I desert those errors even for the drunken death-bed of a Paine, or the delirious war-whoop of the surviving fiends, who would erect their altar on the ruins of society. In my opinion it is difficult to say, whether their tenets are more ludicrous or more detestable. They will not obey the King, or the Prince, or the Parliament, or the Constitution; but they will obey anarchy. They will not believe in the Prophets, in Moses, in Mahomet, in Christ; but they believe Tom Paine! With no government but confusion, and no creed but scepticism, I believe, in my soul, they would abjure the one, if it became legitimate, and rebel against the other, if it was once established.

"Holding, my Lord, opinions such as these, I should consider myself culpable, if, at such a crisis, I did not declare them: A lover of my country, I yet draw a line between patriotism and rebellion. A warm friend to liberty of conscience, I will not confound toleration with infidelity. With all its ambiguity, I shall die in the doctrines of the Christian faith; and, with all its errors, I am contented to live under the glorious safeguards of the British Constitution."



## LITERARY NOTICES.

The Editors will feel obliged to Literary Gentlemen and Publishers, for the communication of Notices (Post Paid) suited to this Department of the CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINE.

## WORKS PREPARING FOR PUBLICATION.

The Domestic Minister's Assistant; a Course of Morning and Evening Prayer, (for five weeks,) for the use of Families; with Prayers for Particular Occasions. By William Jay.

Revelation Defended; or, a Compendious View of the Truth of the Scriptures, with appropriate Reflections. By the Rev. John Knight, of Ponder's End.

The Rev. H. Todd will soon publish a Vindication of our Authorized Translations of the Bible, and of preceding English Versions.

Sound Mind, or Contributions to the Natural History and Physiology of the Human Intellect. By Dr. Haslam.

Memoirs of the Life of John Wesley, the Founder of the English Methodists. By Robert Southey, Esq. In 2 vols. 8vo.

Memoirs of the Protector, Oliver Cromwell, and his Sons Richard and Henry, illustrated by Original Letters, and other Family Papers. By Oliver Cromwell, Esq. a Descendant of the Family; with Six Portraits.

Biblical Criticisms on the Books of the Old Testament, and Translations of Sacred Songs; with Notes, Critical and Explanatory. By Samuel Horsley, L. L. D. late Lord Bishop of St. Asaph.

A Sabbath among the Tascavora Indians; a true Narrative. This little Work is intended chiefly for the use of Young People, and contains an Account of a Missionary Station; with Brief Notices of the Manners, Customs, and present condition of the American Indians.

Topography and Antiquities of Athens. By Mr. Leake. 8vo. With engravings.

## SELECT LIST OF WORKS RECENTLY PUBLISHED.

Village Sermons. The Eighth and last Volume; with short Prayers, adapted to all the Sermons in the Eight Volumes. By the Rev. George Burder. Price 2s. 6d.

The Evil and Danger of neglecting the Souls of Men; a Sermon. By Dr. Doddridge; reprinted. Price 6d.

The Religious Improvement of National Blessings; a Sermon preached at Haberdasher's Hall, on Friday Morning, Nov. 5, 1819, at the Weekly Lecture, founded by the late William Coward, Esq. By John Hawksley. Price 1s.

The Religion of Mankind. In a Series of Essays. By the Rev. R. Barnside, A. M. 2 vols. 8vo. Price 11. 8s.

A new Edition, carefully revised and corrected, of the Works of Lord Bacon. In 10 vols. 8vo. Price 51. 5s.

An Analysis of the Egyptian Mythology; to which is subjoined, a critical Examination of the Remains of Egyptian Chronology. By J. C. Prichard, M. D. Royal 8vo. 11. 7s. Boards.

The Best Means of preventing the Spread of Antinomianism: a Sermon delivered at Hoxton Chapel, at the Anniversary of Hoxton Academy; June 28, 1819. By the Rev. J. Hooper, A. M. Price 1s. 6d.

The History of Brazil; vol. III. containing a Description of the present State of the Country. By Robert Southey, Esq.

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

COMMUNICATIONS have been this month received from the Rev. Messrs. D. Tyerman.—J. J. Freeman.—Burrell.—J. G. Pike.—J. Fletcher.—Walter Scott.—John Blackburn.—R. W. Newland.—Thornton.—Morison.

Also from V.—W. C.—Moses.—R. Hull.—S. W.—J. R.—J. B.—Epaphras.—Theologus.

The subject of the letter, signed *Madras*, would better besem a private reproof. "An old Fashioned Dissenter" is informed, that Mr. Parry's Lectures are intended for publication, and in them he will most probably find the Author's sentiments upon the subject alluded to.

Our correspondent *Rusticus*, who some months ago commenced a series of papers on the philosophical proofs of the Immortality of the Soul, promises, in the new year, if health and opportunity are afforded, to continue the subject.

A Correspondent asks, "How can the hanging of seven of Saul's sons, (2 Sam. xxi.) be reconciled with the justice of God, or with his own command, that the children should not be put to death for the fathers," &c.

"A Nonconformist's" letter is left at our publisher's.

The SUPPLEMENT to this Magazine will be published on the 20th of December; and will contain our Quarterly Epitome of Missionary Transactions.

Tilling and Hughes, Printers, Chelsea.